

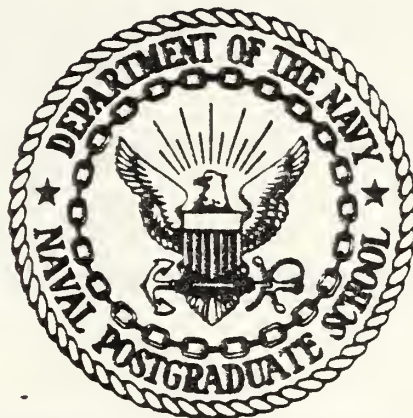
ZIMBABWEAN NATIONALISM AND THE RISE OF  
ROBERT MUGABE

Mark Francis Riley



# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

## Monterey, California



# THESIS

Zimbabwean Nationalism and the  
Rise of Robert Mugabe

by

Mark Francis Riley

June 1982

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Zimbabwean Nationalism and the Rise of Robert Mugabe

by

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Captain, United States Army

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requirements for the degree of

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## I. INTRODUCTION

As of mid-February 1980, most of those who were following the birth of the nation of Zimbabwe were very hesitant to attempt to predict the outcome of the nation's first national elections. Although no one would predict which, if any, party was going to win the most votes, most observers agreed that the election would be very close. It was thought that since no single party was expected to win a clear-cut majority in the election, Lord Soames, the British governor in Salisbury, would have a certain amount of flexibility in selecting a premier to form a government.

Most observers felt that the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and the Zimbabwe African Peoples' Union (ZAPU), the two externally based nationalist political parties, together would win at least the requisite majority of forty-one African seats in parliament. The problem with this, however, was that ZANU and ZAPU were running separately and there was no guarantee, if a coalition was not formed, that the new government would represent a majority of Africans. Joshua Nkomo (ZAPU) was not committed to forming a coalition government with his rival, Robert Mugabe (ZANU). Bishop Abel Muzorewa's United African National Council (UANC) needed only thirty-one seats between his own and another African party to form a government in alliance with the Rhodesian Front's twenty white seats. With Mugabe's decision, after three unsuccessful assassination attempts upon his life, not to appear at any public rallies, most analysts believed that ZANU would be the loyal opposition in any government. [Ref. 1] As Lord Soames and the British Government had expressed their





dislike and fear of the Marxist Mugabe on a number of occasions, it was probable that Soames would be able to select either the moderate Muzorewa or the less radical Nkomo to form a government. [Ref. 2]

An unnamed "international marketing research company" commissioned by a pro-Muzorewa newspaper, The National Observer, to run a public opinion poll, predicted that the UANC would win the largest number of seats. [Ref. 3] In Salisbury, The Times, commenting on Nkomo's apparent move towards moderation vis a vis Mugabe's Marxist radicalism wrote that:

Mr. Nkomo...has made a big comeback...Mr. Mugabe, already soliciting an alliance with the white group in parliament, appears to foresee that he may not emerge as the largest party...The Marxist society in which he personally believes has no electoral appeal [Ref. 4].

Martyn Gregory conducted an interview on 10 April 1980 with an unnamed employee of the Rhodesian Ministry of Home Affairs who acknowledged that that agency, which managed the election, privately predicted after polling had finished that Muzorewa would win 34 seats, Mugabe 26, and Nkomo 20 [Ref. 5]. Thus, the common belief held, up to the day the votes were tallied, was that ZANU would probably not win the election and that even if it did, it would be excluded from power by a RF-UANC-ZAPU coalition.

Thus, it came as quite a surprise to most observers when the election officials announced that Mugabe and ZANU had emerged as landslide victors, winning fifty-seven out of eighty black seats (seventy-one percent) or fifty-seven percent of all the seats in parliament. The next day Soames asked Mugabe to form a government. Mugabe's overwhelming victory was the final act of a play that had begun over forty years earlier with the rise of the organized Zimbabwean nationalist movement and had climaxed with an eight-year guerrilla struggle of international importance.



This study has two primary purposes. The first purpose is to present a history of the nationalist movement in Zimbabwe, to include the emergence of nationalist organizations and leaders, the guerrilla war, and the diplomatic negotiations that occurred during the period. The second purpose of this paper is to determine how and why Robert Mugabe became the first black prime minister of an independent Zimbabwe.

This thesis is divided into three basic sections. The first section, which begins after a brief historical introduction to Rhodesia, covers the years from 1934 to 1972. It deals with the creation and early evolution of the Zimbabwean nationalist organizations, the early Anglo-Rhodesian negotiations, and the beginning of the guerrilla war. For organizational purposes, this period has been divided into three historical phases. The second section, which includes historical phases IV and V, covers the period from 1972 to 1980. This section deals with the struggles within and between the nationalist organizations, the expansion and intensification of the guerrilla war, and the series of diplomatic negotiations that finally culminated in a final settlement of the Rhodesian crisis in December 1979. The third section of this thesis shows why Robert Mugabe and ZANU were the overwhelming victors in the February 1980 elections. The position taken in this section is that the outcome of the election was determined by the relative credibility of the three primary nationalist candidates with the electorate. Thus, this section focuses on a comparison of the candidates' personal backgrounds, political careers, leadership qualities, and sources of support.



## II. HISTORICAL SETTING

From 1890 to 1923, Southern Rhodesia was settled and ruled by the British South Africa Company under a charter from the British government. When the royal charter expired in 1923, the territory became a colony under direct British rule. In 1952, the British government joined Southern Rhodesia and Northern Rhodesia with Nyasaland to form the Central African Federation. The purpose of this federation was primarily economic--to use Southern Rhodesia's managerial and financial resources and coal and Nyasaland's labor force to develop Northern Rhodesia's mineral wealth in order to support both Northern and Southern Rhodesia.

The organized black nationalist movement, exclusive of the anti-colonial wars which occurred at the turn of the century, began in 1934 with the founding of the African National Congress (ANC). The history of the Zimbabwean nationalist movement and of Rhodesia-Zimbabwe between 1934 and 1980 can be divided into five phases. The first phase, lasting from 1934 to 1964, was characterized by the rise and evolution of a number of black nationalist organizations and the increasing repression of these organizations by the Rhodesian government. The foci of the second period, which lasted from 1964 through 1965, were the struggles between the British and Rhodesian governments over what would be the political character of Rhodesia and the whole question of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI). The third historical phase, beginning in early 1966 and ending with the report of the Pearce Commission in 1972, was typified by intense diplomatic negotiations between the British and Rhodesian governments over the issues of Rhodesian





independence and majority rule and concurrently, the formation of black nationalist guerrilla organizations and the beginning and intensification of guerrilla warfare. The determining factors in the fourth period, 1973 through 1978, were the inter and intra party rivalries and splits in the nationalist movement and the prospect of an "internal settlement" between the Smith-Rhodesian Front government and a faction of the nationalist movement. Phase five, which lasted from 1978 until the assumption of the prime-ministership by Robert Mugabe in 1980, was dominated by the interim internal settlement, the controversies surrounding the Muzorewa government, and the final settlement formulated at the Lancaster House Conference.

Action during each one of these historical phases generally occurred at three levels. The first level consisted of actions by and within the black nationalist movement. The second level consisted of actions on the diplomatic scene, to include negotiations between the primary actors--the Rhodesian government, the British government, and the black nationalist leaders and organizations. This level also included the roles of the United Nations, the Frontline States, and South Africa in influencing the situation. At the third level, the action consisted of the guerrilla war and the counterinsurgency. These three levels of action in Rhodesia frequently ran parallel to each other, but were more often than not interrelated.





### III. THE RISE OF ZIMBABWEAN NATIONALISM

#### A. THE EARLY NATIONALIST MOVEMENT: 1934 - 1964

The first African National Congress in Southern Rhodesia was founded by Aaron Jacha in 1934. The first ANC was an elitist political party whose membership was limited to upper and upper-middle class urban residents who had the potential to vote. The goals of the ANC were not to acquire, gain, or control political power, but to influence the decision-making process through dialogue and cooperation with the Rhodesian government. The first ANC was neither nationalist nor revolutionary and by the beginning of the Second World War it had ceased to exist as a functioning organization.

In 1948, the Reverend Thomas Samkange and the Reverend E. Nemapare resurrected the ANC. Membership was again restricted to westernized Zimbabwean elites. The ANC attempted to influence the Rhodesian government to insure Zimbabwean civil rights by giving Zimbabweans the right to participate in the colonial parliament. The most revolutionary action taken by this organization was its support of the general strike of 1948. Generally, the ANC believed that petitions, delegations, and representations by responsible black citizens were better methods of influencing the government than mass strikes and protests. The ANC achieved little success and had all but disappeared by 1953.

The formation of the Central African Federation in 1952 created a rift among the Southern Rhodesian African leaders. A number of African leaders, including Joshua Nkomo, Mike Hove, Jasper Savanhu, and Charles Mzengeli, supported the formation of the Federation because they hoped that it would



end racialism and discrimination. These leaders joined white political parties with the hope of achieving a partnership with the white ruling regime. Another group of black leaders, led by George Nyandoro, Henry Hamadziripi, and Paul Mushonga, opposed the Federation and multiracialism. In August 1955, these more radical leaders formed the City Youth League (CYL) in Harare. The CYL was the first truly nationalist political organization in Southern Rhodesia. Its membership was open to all classes of blacks living in Rhodesia, not just the educated urban elite. The goals of the CYL were to make Africans aware of their political, social, and economic position and to inculcate a feeling of pride and dignity in them. The efforts of the CYL were targetted against the district native commissioners, who were considered the epitome of white domination in Rhodesia. By 1956, the CYL had gained considerable popularity. In that year, due to its mass appeal, the CYL was able to win the Harare Advisory Board elections. The significance of the CYL for the evolution of the Zimbabwean nationalist movement was two-fold. First, it was the first supra-ethnic African nationalist party to draw its membership from the professional-elite, urban-working, and rural-peasant classes. Second, although the CYL had a more radical philosophy towards change than any previous nationalist organization, it still believed in working within the colonial political system to bring about change.

In September 1957, Samkange's ANC and the CYL merged to form the Southern Rhodesian African National Congress (SRANC). By combining the organizationally and increasingly politically strong Harare CYL with the widely recognized ANC, the black leaders were able to create a nationalist organization with the potential for great growth and a truly nation-wide appeal. After much debate and disagreement, the



Congress elected Joshua Nkomo president, James Chikerema vice-president, George Nyandoro general secretary, and Paul Mushonga treasurer. The SRANC was a relatively moderate organization. Its philosophy was non-racial. Its goals were national unity and an equal partnership between all inhabitants of Southern Rhodesia, regardless of race, color, or creed. The SRANC felt that Rhodesia would prosper only if a completely integrated society was created as an alternative to tribalism, racialism, and discrimination. The SRANC swore its allegiance to the British Crown and hoped to obtain reforms within the British colonial administration. Like the CYL, the SRANC continued to denounce, criticize, and embarrass the native district commissioners of the Department of Native Affairs in front of the Zimbabwean masses in the hopes of convincing these Africans that settler power was not that invincible when faced with an organized African opposition.

The SRANC rapidly gained a large mass following among urban and rural blacks from all economic sectors. As mentioned earlier, the SRANC believed in working peacefully and lawfully through the British colonial government. Its goal was not a new black government through revolution, but an equal partnership between blacks and whites through mutual cooperation. It should be noted that before the collapse of the Central African Federation in 1963, Prime Ministers Garfield Todd and Sir Edgar Whitehead had made attempts to ease racial discrimination in Southern Rhodesia. The Public Service Amendment Act No. 42 (1962) opened up the civil service on a non-racial basis. The pass system was eased by the Pass Law (Repeal) Act No. 50 (1960). The Land Apportionment (Amendment) Act No. 54 (1960) eased regulations affecting urban blacks. Nevertheless, this trend towards reform never satisfied the SRANC nor convinced it





that the white government sincerely wanted to end racial discrimination. The SRANC made repeated appeals to the government to repeal the 1951 Native Land Husbandry Act. The act was designed to prevent the soil erosion being caused by traditional African tribal farming methods. It was viewed as discriminatory by the SRANC because its implementation involved cattle destocking and the introduction of individual land tenure, both of which were contrary to African traditions. At the same time, white farmers were not required by the act to destock their herds, thus creating the appearance of an attempt by whites to monopolize the cattle industry.

In late 1958 and early 1959, there were a series of civil disturbances in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. These violent protests coincided with protests in Southern Rhodesia and the Southern Rhodesian government accused the SRANC of complicity in the rioting. Although these charges against the SRANC were never proven, in late February 1959 the Southern Rhodesian government declared a state of emergency and, claiming it was a subversive organization, banned the SRANC. Over 500 members of the SRANC were arrested, of which 300 were detained without trial. Joshua Nkomo, who went into voluntary exile, was the only SRANC leader to escape arrest and detention.

The white settlers in Southern Rhodesia feared that the black nationalist organizations were nothing more than covers for a world-wide communist conspiracy. Consequently, the Rhodesian government enacted a number of laws aimed at stemming the spread of communism and severely limiting the effectiveness of the Zimbabwean nationalist movement. Among these laws were the Unlawful Organizations Act and the Preventive Detention Act of 1959 and the Emergency Powers Act, the Vagrancy Act, and the Law and Order Maintenance Act



of 1960. These acts were the beginning of a repressive, anti-nationalist trend that was to continue until independence was achieved in 1980.

The void left by the banning of the SRANC was filled on 1 January 1960 when the National Democratic Party (NDP) was formed. The formation of the NDP was a significant turning point for a number of reasons. First, the tactics and ultimate goals of the NDP differed dramatically from those of the SRANC. The SRANC had sought to achieve reform by working through the Southern Rhodesian government bureaucracy and by applying internal pressure upon the white minority regime. The SRANC believed that change could be achieved through peaceful means. The NDP, on the other hand, felt that change could only be achieved if external pressure was exerted upon the Southern Rhodesian government. Believing that Great Britain should retain its reserve powers over Southern Rhodesia, the NDP placed greater emphasis upon lobbying the British government than working through the Rhodesian government itself. In addition, the NDP sought to mobilize international support for its cause by lobbying other independent black states and the United Nations. Events in the Belgian Congo and Nigeria and the improving status of the nationalist movements in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland gave the NDP the hope that the internationalization of an internal problem might improve the situation in Southern Rhodesia. Another tactical difference between the SRANC and NDP was the willingness of the latter to resort to violence. While the SRANC never approved of violence as a means of achieving an end, the NDP did. In 1960, the NDP organized a large number of riots in Salisbury and Bulawayo for the purpose of pressuring the British and Rhodesian governments to call for a constitutional conference.



The ultimate goals of the SRANC and the NDP also differed. The NDP was more radical and revolutionary. While the SRANC looked for a non-racial society and an equal partnership with the white minority within the framework of the current governmental system, the NDP wanted "one man, one vote," an end to colonialism, complete independence, and closer cooperation with other black governments and black nationalist movements in Africa.

The NDP was also significant in that it demonstrated the splits within the Zimbabwean nationalist movement. The first division among Zimbabwean nationalists involved class. While the SRANC could claim a membership from all class groups and had a wide popular base, the NDP was an elitist organization whose membership, like that of the old ANC, was drawn primarily from the urban intelligencia. Because the activities of the NDP were often centered around the urban industrial areas and schools, the NDP often neglected the needs and desires of the rural peasant population. Consequently, the NDP's effectiveness as a national organization was limited by its failure to develop either a wide popular base or a grass-root organization in the rural areas.

The other split within the nationalist movement revolved around Joshua Nkomo. When the NDP was formed in January 1960, Michael Mawema was appointed its interim president as Nkomo was in self-exile in Great Britain. The party was divided between those who wanted Nkomo as president and those who felt that he was a coward for leaving Rhodesia. The critics of Nkomo within the NDP broke away and formed the Zimbabwe National Party (ZNP), which later became the Pan-African Socialist Union (PASU).

Nkomo again became a controversial figure at the London Constitutional Conference of 1961. While Nkomo was in





exile, the NDP had been pressuring the British and Rhodesian governments to hold a constitutional conference. It was hoped by the NDP that a constitution would be framed that would fulfill its nationalist aspirations--a non-racial society, the end of colonialism, and independence. Nkomo returned from exile in October 1960 and became the president of the NDP and subsequently led the NDP delegation to the London Constitutional Conference in early 1961. At the convention, Nkomo, who was politically a moderate conservative, and Sithole, Chitepo, and Silundika, agreed to a constitution that provided for fifteen African seats in a parliament of sixty-five seats. When Nkomo returned to Rhodesia, he came to the realization that the constitution was not acceptable to the majority of the NDP. Michael Mawema and Leopold Takawira, members of the NDP executive, had already publically criticized him and others had accused him of selling out the black masses to colonialism and white racism. Consequently, Nkomo felt obliged to repudiate the constitution. Unfortunately, the NDP could not reject a constitution that it had already agreed to. The greatest irony of the entire episode, however, was the fact that the NDP's boycott of the 1962 election due to the unacceptability of the constitution to Africans enabled Winston Field's conservative Rhodesian Front (RF) Party to come to power almost unopposed. Thus, because of its internal disagreements, the NDP had shot itself in the foot.

On 9 December 1961, the NDP was banned. All of the executive members were arrested and detained, with one ironic exception. Joshua Nkomo again escaped arrest and detention because he was out of the country at the time of the crackdown.

The Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU) was founded on 17 December 1961. Although, for obvious reasons, its





leadership did not acknowledge it publicly, ZAPU was the direct descendent of the NDP. It was, in fact, the NDP with a different name. Headed by Joshua Nkomo, ZAPU had the same organization and leaders as the banned NDP. Although anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist, ZAPU was neither socialist nor communist. It was the first Zimbabwean nationalist organization to apply the concept of Pan-Africanism to the liberation movement. Its objectives were as follows:

A. Aims and Objectives:

- I. To establish the policy of the one-man-one-vote as the basis of government in this country.
- II. To maintain the spirit of democracy and love of liberty among the people of Zimbabwe.
- III. To unite the African people so that they liberate themselves from all forms of imperialism and colonialism.
- IV. To fight relentlessly for the elimination of all forms of oppression.
- V. To create the conditions for the economic prosperity of the people under a government based on the principle of one-man-one-vote.
- VI. To foster the development of the best values in African culture and traditions, so as to establish a desirable order.

B. Pan-Africanism:

- I. ZAPU shall instill and maintain the spirit of Pan-Africanism in Zimbabwe.
- II. It shall work co-operatively with any other movement in Africa or elsewhere which fosters the spirit of Pan-Africanism.

C. International:

- I. ZAPU shall observe, respect and promote human rights contained in the Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations Charter.
- II. It shall maintain peaceful and friendly relations with such nations as are peaceful and friendly towards the African people of Zimbabwe.
- III. It shall co-operate with any such international forces as are genuinely engaged in the struggle for the total and immediate liquidation of colonialism and imperialism. [Ref. 6]



During 1962, the ZAPU leadership more and more came to believe that change would only occur through violent revolution. As Rhodesian security forces continued to arrest and detain nationalist subversives, the ZAPU leadership came to the decision that if ZAPU were to be banned, it would go underground rather than form a new organization [Ref. 7]. During that same year, the Zimbabwe Liberation Army was created. Nathan Shamuyarira notes that during this period the philosophy of the ZANU leadership that independence could be achieved peacefully began to change:

Nkomo too talked in warlike terms: if Britain did not act, he said, 'we will free ourselves. There are only three methods possible-- negotiations, economic breakdown, or bloody revolution. I warn Britain that if she does not act, I will quit the present nature of politics that we have been following.' [Ref. 8]

ZAPU was banned in September 1962. Ironically, Nkomo was again on a trip away from Southern Rhodesia. In Lusaka at the time ZAPU was banned, Nkomo, after several days hesitation, fled into hiding in Tanganyika. Thus, three organizations of which Nkomo was the head had been banned and on all three occasions he was conveniently out of the country at the time of the crack-down by the security forces. To many of the other nationalists, it appeared that, at the very best, Nkomo was a coward who was only interested in saving his own skin and at the worst a traitor who was collaborating with the security forces. Amid these accusations and because of pressures applied by the Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole, the ZAPU National treasurer, and Presidents Nyerere of Tanganyika and Kaunda of Northern Rhodesia, Nkomo was persuaded to fly back to Salisbury for three months restriction. [Ref. 9]

At this time a split occurred within the nationalist movement and ZAPU. There were two basic reasons for the split. First, for the reasons mentioned previously, many



Zimbabwean nationalists lost confidence in Nkomo's personal leadership ability. Secondly, ZAPU had failed to organize a domestic revolutionary liberation movement with a mass popular base. Instead, ZAPU had placed its emphasis, as demonstrated by Nkomo's constant foreign travel, upon rallying international support for the Zimbabwean liberation movement. This strategy had failed. In 1963 the split within ZAPU manifested itself in the formation of two splinter groups. The organization that supported Nkomo was the Peoples Care-taker Council (PCC). The anti-Nkomo organization was the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU).

After Nkomo had served his detention in Rhodesia in 1962, he called the ZAPU executive council, to include Ndabaningi Sithole and Robert Mugabe, together for a conference in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. Nkomo desired to form a government in exile in Tanzania. President Julius Nyerere opposed this plan on the grounds that the liberation movement would only be successful if ZAPU operated within Southern Rhodesia. He felt that Nkomo's leadership was needed in Southern Rhodesia, not Tanzania. The ZAPU executive council also disagreed with Nkomo in this matter. The executive council was also disappointed in Nkomo's lack of decisiveness as a leader and was concerned about the lack of confidence in Nkomo that many Pan-African leaders had expressed to them [Ref. 10]. Unwilling to tolerate this criticism or to compromise on these issues, Nkomo left his executive council financially stranded in Dar-es-Salaam and returned to Rhodesia. Seven of the executive council members denounced and deposed Nkomo and appointed Ndabaningi Sithole as their leader. Nkomo scheduled a conference at Cold Comfort Farm near Salisbury for 10 August 1963. The purpose of the conference was to solve the split and determine the leadership of the nationalist movement. Nkomo





invited over 5,000 people to the conference, including the dissident executive council members. Having returned to Southern Rhodesia, the executive council declined the invitation to Cold Comfort Farm and on 8 August 1963 formed the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and elected Ndabaningi Sithole as the interim president. At the Cold Comfort Farm Conference, Nkomo was confirmed as the primary Zimbabwean nationalist leader (president of ZAPU and leader of the PCC).

At the same time, Ndabaningi Sithole, Robert Mugabe, Washington Malianga and Leopold Takawira were suspended from the nationalist movement.

Between August and September 1963, several attempts to reconcile the PCC and ZANU failed. Although officially the PCC was not a political party, and thus less susceptible to Rhodesian government repression, in reality it was still ZAPU. Both the PCC and ZANU professed anti-colonialism, pan-Africanism, and socialism. The biggest difference between the two organizations was in the manner in which they wanted to bring about Zimbabwe's liberation. The PCC still emphasized the use of international arenas and constitutionalism to affect reform. ZANU, on the other hand, believed in self-reliance and the direct confrontation of the enemy. Although ZANU criticized ZAPU for failing to develop a revolutionary program of national liberation, at this point in time it did not itself have such a program. Both the PCC and ZANU were banned on 26 August 1964. At this time, hundreds of ZANU and PCC members, among them Nkomo, Sithole, and Mugabe, began more than a decade of detention.

In spite of these apparent set-backs to the nationalist movement in Zimbabwe, events in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland from 1960 to 1963 gave Southern Rhodesians cause





to hope that change and even independence might be around the corner. After intensified opposition, riots, and strikes in the two northern territories, Great Britain set up two commissions to investigate the political situation there. As a result of these commissions, Great Britain held a constitutional conference in 1960. The right of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland to secede from the Central African Federation was recognized. When the two territories declared their intention to secede, Britain agreed to dissolve the federation on 31 December 1963. At that time, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland were granted independence from Great Britain and became the black governed nations of Zambia and Malawi, respectively. The granting of independence with majority rule was a great encouragement to Zimbabwean nationalist aspirations. Surely Great Britain would do the same for Southern Rhodesia. Nevertheless, this hope would soon be shattered when the Zimbabwean black nationalists came to the realization that the white Rhodesian Front government was also determined to achieve independence from Great Britain, but without majority rule.

On the whole, the levels of violence and guerrilla activity were extremely limited during Phase I. Zimbabwean nationalist leaders still held the hope that, with the help of Great Britain, change and independence could be brought about largely through peaceful, constitutional means. Most of the violence was limited to confrontations between the nationalists themselves, such as those that occurred between the PCC and ZANU in 1964. Guerrilla activities were limited largely to organizing forces, training cadre, and planning acts of sabotage. In February 1964, the PCC decided to divide Southern Rhodesia into command regions, or fighting zones. At around the same time, ZANU also planned a number of acts of sabotage aimed at impressing black opinion and



lowering white morale. Most of these sabotage plans were thwarted by Rhodesian intelligence before they could be implemented. One successful attack was made, however, by the infamous "Crocodile Commando" group which killed a white farmer, Petrus Oberhultzer, on 4 July 1964. [Ref. 11] This event was notable because it was the first attack on a white settler since 1897 and because it signified the beginning of the guerrilla war.

#### B. THE UDI QUESTION: 1964 - 1965

The period from early 1964 to November 1965 was dominated by the question of whether or not the Rhodesian government would unilaterally declare Rhodesia's independence from Great Britain. While the action during Phase I was dominated by the nationalist movement and, in particular, the political in-fighting within the nationalist movement, the action in Phase II was dominated by the struggle between Great Britain and Rhodesia and the struggle within the Rhodesian government over who would determine the future political disposition of Rhodesia. The question of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) was brought to a head by the events and trends of Phase I.

A number of issues led to the UDI by Ian Smith and his Rhodesian Front Party (RFP). First of all, the dissolution of the Central African Federation and the granting of independence to Zambia and Malawi by Great Britain made white Rhodesian settlers extremely nervous. The white settlers felt that the British government had sold out their counterparts in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland to the black nationalists and were fearful that Britain would do the same to white Rhodesians if given the opportunity. This fear was reinforced by several other circumstances. The rise of African nationalism within the Central African Federation



had demonstrated to white Rhodesians that there was a new, powerful force with which they would have to deal. It was also feared that the Labor Party victory over the Conservative Party in the 1964 elections would result in greater pressure from Great Britain for majority rule in Rhodesia. This pressure for majority rule was intensified by the internationalization of the problem by the black nationalist organizations, the newly independent black nations of Africa, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and the United Nations. Finally, there was an historical and cultural imperative among white Rhodesians to improve and solidify their own positions vis a vis Africans and to strengthen their power over the African through institutionalized racism.

White Rhodesians had good reason to believe that they would be able to hold off indefinitely, if not eliminate, the black nationalist onslaught. The distribution of military forces at the time of the dissolution of the Central African Federation had provided Rhodesia with an overwhelming regional military superiority and white Rhodesians were confident that any threat, either internal or external, could be successfully met. In addition, repressive measures had been quite successful in crippling the nationalist movement.

After the break-up of the Central African Federation, Great Britain and Rhodesia began preliminary discussions concerning Rhodesia's independence. The policy of the British government was that no independence would be granted to Rhodesia without the gradual termination of racial discrimination and progress towards majority rule. This prerequisite for independence was totally unacceptable to the Rhodesian Front government. When the RFP suggested that UDI was the only solution to the problem, Prime Minister





Winston Field objected to the suggestion. The Rhodesian cabinet replaced him with Ian Smith. On 11 November 1965, Prime Minister Smith unilaterally declared Rhodesia's independence from Great Britain.

During this phase, the nationalist parties and organizations were relatively inactive, with one important exception. Guerrilla forces were being trained in other countries. Between September 1964 and March 1965, forty ZANU members went to Ghana for guerrilla training. Meanwhile, between March 1964 and October 1965, fifty-two ZAPU recruits took guerrilla training in Moscow, Nanking, and Pyongyang, North Korea. [Ref. 12] By the time of UDI, guerrillas had already started infiltrating back into Rhodesia.

#### C. POST-UDI NEGOTIATIONS AND THE GUERRILLA WAR: 1966 - 1972

Phase III, which began immediately after the UDI and lasted until the announcement of the Pearce Commission findings in May 1972, was dominated by two major sets of developments. First there were the efforts of the British government, first Labour and later Conservative administrations, to negotiate a peaceful settlement with the Rhodesian Front government to end the crisis. The second set of developments concerned the dramatic change in tactics by the nationalist organizations. Specifically, the Zimbabwean nationalists came to the realization that the solution to the crisis and ultimate majority rule would not come about through legal, non-violent constitutional or diplomatic efforts but would only be achieved through guerrilla warfare. As will be shown, the irony of this phase is that the British commitment to a peaceful negotiated settlement in many ways forced the black nationalists to resort to guerrilla warfare. The British refusal to even consider the





use of military force to solve the problem in Rhodesia had the unwanted effects of buoying the RF government's confidence in its ability to ride out the crisis and driving the Zimbabwean nationalists to desperate measures when they realized that the British government was unwilling to take the necessary steps to solve the Rhodesian problem.

Just prior to UDI in November 1965, Harold Wilson's newly elected Labour government warned the Rhodesians of the consequences of UDI. An UDI would be considered by Great Britain to be an act of defiance, and as such would have no constitutional effect on Rhodesia's status. No Commonwealth government would be able to recognize the UDI. The British government would sever relations with Rhodesia and initiate economic sanctions against her. Financial and trade relations between Great Britain and Rhodesia would be jeopardized. Further financial aid would be terminated. In short, Britain would make every effort to isolate Rhodesia diplomatically and to cripple her economically. Despite making these diplomatic and economic threats against Rhodesia, Wilson refused to threaten the use of force against Rhodesia should she unilaterally declare her independence [Ref. 13].

British overtures towards Smith's RF government began immediately after UDI. In August 1966, the British government announced the start of exploratory talks between officials of the two governments and on 19 September 1966 the first British delegation arrived in Salisbury to meet with Rhodesian officials. On 28 September 1966, the British diplomats returned to London with little to show for their efforts. In October 1966, the British government again threatened the Rhodesian government with economic sanctions unless it agreed to renounce its UDI.

The first round of serious negotiations between Great Britain and Rhodesia began on 1 December 1966 aboard the HMS



Tiger. The discussions aboard the HMS Tiger between the Wilson and Smith governments resulted in a working document that was to be the basis for a constitutional agreement. The basic provisions of this document were as follows:

A. Unimpeded progress to majority rule:

1. The creation of a legislative assembly with 33 "A" roll seats, 17 "B" roll seats, and of 17 reserved European seats and of a senate consisting of 12 Europeans, 8 Africans, and 6 chiefs to be elected by the chiefs council.

2. The extension of the franchise to all Africans over 30 who could fulfill citizenship and residence requirements.

B. Guarantees against retrogressive amendments to the constitution:

1. A provision that any amendments to specifically entrenched provisions of the constitution would require a veto of three-quarters of the total membership of both the assembly and the senate voting together and be subject to an appeal to a constitutional commission in Rhodesia consisting of the chief justice and other justices with further appeal to the judicial committee of the privy council.

C. Immediate improvement in the political status of Africans.

D. Progress towards ending racial discrimination:

1. The establishment of a royal commission on racial discrimination.

E. The British government would have to be satisfied that any proposed basis for independence would have to be acceptable to the people of Rhodesia as a whole.

F. That there would be no oppression of majority by minority or of minority by majority:

1. The creation of a broadly-based interim government headed by Ian Smith.

2. Responsibility for the maintenance of law and order and protection of human rights to be in the hands of the British governor who would be advised by a security council consisting of the responsible ministers, the heads of the defense forces, the chief of police, and a representative of the British government.

3. Free elections which would include peaceful campaigning and other political activities.  
[Ref. 14]



The Wilson government accepted this working document in its entirety, the Smith government refused to accept those provisions leading to majority African rule. Thus, the requirements for African participation in government led to a Rhodesian rejection of the proposed settlement and the collapse of the Tiger talks.

Having failed in its first attempt to negotiate a settlement with the Rhodesians, the British government hardened its stance against Smith's Rhodesian Front government. First of all, the British government adopted the policy of no independence before majority rule (NIBMAR). As far as Great Britain was concerned, the mere progress towards majority rule would no longer be an acceptable prerequisite for independence. Secondly, Britain decided to pressure the Rhodesian government by following through with its threats. The British government, under the provisions of Articles 39 and 41 of the United Nations Charter, introduced a resolution to the UN Security Council calling for mandatory sanctions on Rhodesia's most important exports. On 16 December 1966, determining that the situation in Rhodesia constituted a threat to international peace, the UN Security Council voted to impose selective mandatory sanctions against Rhodesia that would include certain specified Rhodesian exports and the supply to Rhodesia of arms, military equipment, vehicles and aircraft, and oil and oil products.

Throughout 1967 and 1968, the Wilson government continued to keep the channels of communication with Rhodesia open. The British government sent a number of representatives to Salisbury to discuss a possible settlement with Ian Smith. These diplomatic missions were led respectively by Lord Alport (June 1967), Mr. George Thomason, the British Commonwealth Secretary (November





1967), and Sir Alex Douglas-Home (February 1968). As had happened before, none of the British emissaries was able to convince Smith to agree to a settlement. Again Great Britain had to increase the pressure against Rhodesia in order to force the Smith government into serious negotiations. In March 1968, Great Britain called upon the UN Security Council to discuss the imposition of further economic sanctions against Rhodesia and on 29 May 1968 a resolution was passed which imposed comprehensive mandatory sanctions upon Rhodesia. The resolution required all UN member states to join in an embargo of all trade with Rhodesia (with minor exceptions such as medical and educational supplies), on all air and sea shipments of goods to and from Rhodesia, and on the investment of funds in Rhodesia. In addition, member countries were to prevent the entry into their territory of persons travelling on Rhodesian passports, persons believed to be aiding the Rhodesian regime, and aircraft from airlines operating to and from Rhodesia. The UN resolution required member nations to discourage emigration to Rhodesia.

On 20 September 1968, Mr. James Bottomly, the Under Secretary at the British Foreign Office, began further discussions with Ian Smith in Salisbury. These discussions led to negotiations between Great Britain and Rhodesia aboard the HMS Fearless from 9 - 13 October 1968. Almost all of the proposals made during the Fearless negotiations were drawn from the Tiger proposals of two years earlier. In addition to the original Tiger proposals, the following were added:

(1) Action was to be taken to provide more educational facilities for African Rhodesians. The British government would provide 5 million pounds a year for ten years, which would be matched by equal sums from the Rhodesian government, in pursuit of this goal.

(2) The British government would act as the trustee for African Rhodesians and because of this the fifth





principle, acceptability to the people of Rhodesia as a whole, was transcendent and would over-ride all other principles.

Despite the additional safeguards proposed for the African majority in the Fearless talks, the real significance of these negotiations lies in the fact that they demonstrated the willingness of the British to compromise on "principle" and grant concessions in order to reach a settlement with the Rhodesian Front government. The fact that the British revived the basic Tiger proposals at the Fearless talks shows that they had abandoned the principle of NIBMAR as a prerequisite for Rhodesian independence. In addition, the terms of the proposed Fearless agreement ensured that the Rhodesian administration, rather than the British governor, would retain control if the constitutional proposals were found to be unacceptable to the people of Rhodesia as a whole. Calculations indicated that, should the Fearless proposals have been accepted, even under the most favorable conditions, majority rule would not have been attained until 1999. [Ref. 15]

As was the case before, the proposals were unacceptable to Smith's Rhodesian Front government. The Rhodesian government rejected the aspects of the proposed agreement dealing with the composition of the legislature, the appeal to the judicial committee of the privy council, and the extent to which voting would count during elections. Consequently, the Fearless talks broke down on 13 October 1968.

The final break between Great Britain and Rhodesia came in June 1969 with the decision by the Rhodesian Front government, endorsed by a referendum of the overwhelmingly European electorate, to declare Rhodesia a republic under a new constitution. The UDI, or Republican, Constitution was introduced to replace the 1965 Constitution which the Rhodesian government considered to be



no longer acceptable to the people of Rhodesia because it contains a number of objectionable features, the principle one being that it provides for eventual majority rule and, inevitably, the domination of one race by another and that it does not guarantee that the government will be retained. [Ref. 16]

The new constitution was based upon the premise of separate racial development in all spheres and envisaged the attainment of racial parity between blacks and whites in the parliament only in the very distant future. The major provisions of the Republican Constitution, which went into effect on 2 March 1970, were as follows:

A. The Rhodesian legislative assembly was to be composed of:

1. Fifty European members elected on the rolls of European voters for fifty European constituencies.

2. Sixteen African members, eight of which were to be elected by the Africans enrolled on the rolls of African voters and eight by the electoral colleges comprised of the chiefs, headmen, and elected councillors of the African councils of the Tribal Trust Lands.

B. The number of African members in the legislative assembly would be increased, but the ratio of the African to European membership in the house assembly was directly related to the proportion of the total income tax revenue each community paid.

C. Should the African ever reach parity representation with the Europeans (i.e., 50 seats apiece), there would be no further increase in their representation.

D. The senate was to consist of 10 European members elected by European members of the lower house, 10 African members elected by all African chiefs, and three members appointed by the president.

The effect of the Republican Constitution was that after the elections 250,000 Europeans had 50 representatives in the assembly and 4,000,000 Africans had only 16 representatives, half of whom were chiefs, headmen, and councillors who were for all practical purposes nothing more than government employees. Thus, by means of the new constitution, the Smith regime was not only able to postpone political parity indefinitely, but also was able to foreclose altogether any future possibility of majority African rule.





The implementation of the Republican Constitution on 2 March 1970 effectively isolated Rhodesia from the international community. The British residual mission in Salisbury and Rhodesia House in London were both closed. The British governor, Sir Humphrey Gibbs, who had been nothing more than a figure-head since UDI in 1965, resigned. On 18 March 1970, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution calling for the immediate rupture of all relations with Rhodesia. Eleven of the thirteen diplomatic missions in Rhodesia were withdrawn, leaving only the South African and Portuguese missions. The Rhodesian Republic was denied official recognition by all the members of the United Nations.

No sooner had the British government broken off relations with Rhodesia when it decided to re-open a dialogue with the Rhodesian Front government in the hope of getting the negotiating process going again. This was due to the fact that the Conservatives, led by Edward Heath, came to power in June 1970 when Wilson's Labour government was voted out of office. The Conservative Party lacked the Labour Party's anti-Rhodesia wing and thus was in a much better position to make concessions to the Rhodesian regime during the formulation of a settlement. In addition, the international climate was more favorable to a compromise solution to the Anglo-Rhodesian crisis. There were indications that the Nixon administration was going to be more favorably disposed towards the Rhodesian Republic and on 6 October 1971 the U.S. Senate would vote to defy the UN sanctions and to permit the importation of chrome from Rhodesia. Also, the Heath government felt that, due to the general instability in Africa, which was typified by the overthrow of President Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana, international organizations such as the OAU, the Commonwealth, and the UN were unlikely to actively oppose a compromise Anglo-Rhodesian





settlement if there were any chance that such an agreement would improve the stability of the region.

Shortly after it came to power in June 1970, the British Conservative government announced that it was initiating new attempts to re-open negotiations with the Rhodesian Front government. The initial contacts were through private, unofficial channels. On 16 February 1971, Ian Smith confirmed that contact had been made between the British and Rhodesian governments in Salisbury. In April 1971, Lord Goodman led what would be the first of five missions to Salisbury to prepare the way for the Anglo-Rhodesian Summit Conference. During October, Lord Goodman was able to achieve a basis for negotiations with the Rhodesians.

On 15 November 1971, a British delegation of 27, led by the foreign minister, Sir Alex Douglas-Home, arrived in Salisbury to begin the Anglo-Rhodesian Summit Conference. On 24 November 1971, the Anglo-Rhodesian Accord was signed in Salisbury. The Anglo-Rhodesian Accord represents a major compromise by the British in that the British government accepted, almost completely in tact, the Rhodesian constitution of 1969, removed the principle of NIBMAR as a prerequisite for independence, and of the original six principles agreed upon in the Tiger and Fearless negotiations, gave away on all of them except principle number five, which allowed the British government to satisfy itself that the proposed settlement was acceptable to the people of Rhodesia as a whole. In addition to the 1969 Republican Constitution, the Anglo-Rhodesian Agreement also included the following important proposals:

1. A commission was to be formed to inquire into and make recommendations concerning discriminatory legislation and a justiciable declaration of rights. However, attempts to remove racial discrimination may be vetoed if the government considers that there are "overriding considerations" and the declaration of rights (which is qualified by numerous exceptions and provisos) could be rendered largely ineffectual by the



suspension of rights after the declaration of a state of emergency.

2. The prospect of eventual political parity followed by a black parliamentary majority in the subsequent election.

3. Amendments to entrenched sections of the constitution would require, in addition to a two-thirds majority of all the members of the house of assembly and the senate voting separately, the affirmative votes of the majority of the white representatives and a majority of black representatives in the house of assembly. These procedures, while guarding against possible future retrogressive measures, could also be used to block progressive legislation. [Ref. 17]

Both the British and Rhodesian governments expected the majority of Rhodesians, black and white, to accept the Anglo-Rhodesian Agreement. On 25 November 1971, the British government appointed a commission, headed by Lord Pearce, a former Lord of Appeal in Ordinary, to canvass the views of all sections of Rhodesian opinion, including Rhodesians in detention and living abroad, to determine the acceptability of the proposals to Rhodesians as a whole. The Pearce Commission visited Southern Rhodesia from 11 January to 12 March 1972. During that period there was considerable civil unrest and a number of demonstrations organized by Africans opposed to the settlement. Much of this opposition was due to the efforts of Bishop Abel Muzorewa, who had emerged as the leading African politician in Rhodesia. On 16 December 1971, Muzorewa had formed the African National Council (ANC) for the express purpose of organizing opposition to the Anglo-Rhodesian Accord. On 12 May 1972, the Pearce Commission presented to the British Parliament a report which concluded that the proposals were not acceptable to the people of Rhodesia as a whole:

We are satisfied on our evidence that the proposals are acceptable to the great majority of Europeans. We are equally satisfied, after considering all our evidence, including that on intimidation, that the majority of Africans rejected the proposals. In our opinion the people of Rhodesia as a whole do not regard the proposals as acceptable as a basis for independence. [Ref. 18]



The Commission believed that the main reasons for the rejection of the proposals by the black majority were a deep distrust of the government, the failure of the British and Rhodesian governments to consult African nationalist leaders during any stage of the negotiations, and a persistent belief in Britain's ability to continue influencing events in Rhodesia.

The political wings of ZAPU/PCC and ZANU were relatively inactive and ineffective between 1966 and 1972. The military wings, ZIPRA and ZANLA, on the other hand, were very active militarily, although still very ineffective. The most straightforward method of discussing the problems faced by the political and military wings of the nationalist organizations is by dealing with each separately. For many of the difficulties faced by ZAPU/PCC and ZANU were due to the fact that the political effort was not coordinated with the military effort.

The low profile and resulting ineffectiveness of the political wings of the nationalist organizations between 1966 and 1972 was due to a number of conditions prevailing in Rhodesia. First of all, the nationalist movement had never recovered from the split that had occurred between ZAPU/PCC and ZANU in 1963. Consequently, ZAPU and ZANU expended more effort denouncing each other than dealing with the problems of UDI and majority rule. This lack of co-operation prevented the nationalists from providing a united front to negotiate with the British and Rhodesian governments.

Secondly, by 1966, most of the nationalist leaders had been imprisoned in Rhodesia. Those who were not in prison were in exile abroad. This situation had a number of negative effects on the nationalist movement in Rhodesia. Communications between the imprisoned nationalist leaders,





the exiled nationalist leaders, and the guerrilla leaders was very difficult, making any kind of coordinated effort nearly impossible. With the majority of the leaders in prison or in exile, the leadership of the nationalist movement inside Rhodesia was often left to young and inexperienced members of the nationalist organizations.

Finally, the credibility and courage of the nationalist leaders in exile was always very much in question. While the Zimbabwean nationalist leaders abroad worked to court the support of the UN, the OAU, the Commonwealth Nations, and the Frontline States and to set up a government in exile, they received increasing pressure from the Frontline States, particularly Tanzania and Zambia and the FRELIMO guerrilla movement in Mozambique, to say nothing of the guerrillas and imprisoned nationalists within Rhodesia, to return to Rhodesia so that they could better lead the masses in the fight for independence and majority rule. The final result of these problems was a lack of leadership, organization, and coordinated effort within the nationalist movement inside Rhodesia between 1966 and 1972.

This struggle within the struggle was typified by the continuing rivalry between ZAPU and ZANU in late 1965 and 1966. ZANU called for a united front with ZAPU as long as such a unification did not result in the subordination of ZANU under Nkomo's PCC. ZANU wanted unity only in the military aspects of the liberation struggle. However, ZAPU demanded nothing less than the complete disbanding of ZANU and the subordination of its membership under Nkomo's leadership. Consequently, neither organization would give in to the other's demands and the united front was not formed. By 1966, the Liberation Committee of the OAU had recognized ZAPU as the largest and most authentic Zimbabwean nationalist party and had stopped financial support of ZANU. The





cut-off of funds to ZANU by the OAU did not prevent ZANU from going to individual countries and other organizations for support. As a result, while both ZAPU and ZANU were claiming to be more revolutionary than the other and spending much of their time trying to gather support from the UN, Commonwealth of Nations, and various Afro-Asian organizations, neither of them was carrying on a revolution inside of Rhodesia.

Because of their lack of organization, unity, and purposefulness, neither of the two major nationalist organizations participated in any of the Anglo-Rhodesian negotiations that occurred between 1966 and 1972. Nevertheless, blame for this cannot be placed solely at the doorstep of the nationalist leaders. Ironically, they were never invited to participate in the negotiations to determine the future of the black majority of Rhodesia. The idea of majority rule was abhorrent to the Rhodesian Front government. Certainly the Rhodesian government could not invite organizations that it had banned to participate in discussions about power-sharing. The British government, on the other hand, taking a paternalistic view of the situation, felt that the nationalists were not yet ready to speak for themselves and that therefore the British would have to look out for their interests for them.

Not surprisingly, both ZAPU and ZANU rejected all of the agreements that had been negotiated between the British and Rhodesian governments between 1966 and 1972. It was the feeling of the black nationalist organizations that these talks were irrelevant to the Zimbabwean struggle for independence. In a memorandum to the Commonwealth Heads of States Conference on 7 January 1969 on the Fearless Proposals, ZAPU stated that:

Any solution to the Rhodesian problem will have to fulfill, simultaneously, all of the following conditions:



1. immediate and unconditional release of all freedom fighters condemned to death; all freedom fighters in imprisonment and all those under detention and restriction; dropping of all charges and release of any freedom fighters under arrest;

2. free and unfettered conditions for Mr. Joshua Nkomo, leader of the African people of Zimbabwe, to take full charge and conduct of all the affairs of the African people in order to bring about immediate and unqualified majority rule;

3. dissolution of the minority regime and all of its institutions;

4. drawing of an unqualified majority rule independence constitution with no elements whatsoever of class, racial, or tribal distinctions or differentiations;

5. immediate, total, and radical reconstruction of the army, police, and administration so that these correspond with the principles and purposes of majority rule;

6. all racist and reactionary laws must cease to have effect immediately and be expunged from the statutes.

Majority rule must take immediate effect with no transition whatever. There can be no bargaining on any of the above conditions. They are correct and just. [Ref. 19]

The position of ZANU on the Anglo-Rhodesian negotiations was exemplified in the following:

Britain and Ian Smith have no right to talk about African independence without African consent and participation. Both of them are imperialists and have no interest in liberating the Africans. Their talks about settlement have virtually no effect on the Africans and can never be regarded as serious. [Ref. 20]

As mentioned earlier, Bishop Abel Muzorewa founded the African National Council (ANC) in December 1971 for the purpose of opposing the Anglo-Rhodesian Accord. In a statement to the Pearce Commission made on 3 January 1972, the ANC concluded that:

It is clear that the proposals as they now stand do not provide a satisfactory arrangement acceptable to the vast majority of the people in the country. On behalf of these people, the ANC calls for the Pearce Commission to report the rejection of these terms, which, if accepted, can only serve to perpetuate the existing divisions and injustice in Rhodesia. [Ref. 21]



In a letter to Sir Alec Douglas-Home concerning the Pearce Commission and the Anglo-Rhodesian Accord, the Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole, the imprisoned leader of ZANU, wrote from Salisbury Prison in January 1972 that:

The fundamental point you should bear in mind Sir Alex, is that the problem facing this country is basically a political one. But your kith and kin, with your support, hope to solve it by police and military action. The Anglo-Rhodesian Proposals cannot be implemented without military and police actions over many years, because they lack one fundamental thing, and that is majority rule now.

I sincerely hope that you will give this matter a further rethink so that a realistic solution to the present problem may be hammered out for good, for the good of black and white, and this can only be done if all interested parties meet together, at a conference table on a basis of give-and-take. [Ref. 22]

Two key events occurred during Phase III that would have an important effect in determining the future leadership of the political wings of the nationalist movements in Zimbabwe. First of all, the formation of the African National Council in 1971 had an importance that would reach far beyond the immediate issue of the Anglo-Rhodesian Proposals. The creation of the ANC signified the emergence of the heretofore relatively obscure Bishop Abel Muzorewa as a nationalist leader to be reckoned with. The second event involved the Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole, the leader of ZANU.

In 1969, Sithole was sentenced to six years in prison for allegedly plotting to assassinate Ian Smith and two of his cabinet members. During his trial, it is still unclear for what reasons, Sithole denounced the armed struggle. Although Sithole would later disavow his own repudiation of the armed struggle, the damage to his credibility with the other nationalist political and guerrilla leaders had already been done. Although Sithole would at times again become a dominant actor in the nationalist movement, the







questions about his sincerity and dedication would prevent him from ever completely recovering his reputation as a leader. This beginning of Sithole's gradual demise is important because it marked the beginning of Robert Mugabe's emergence as the leader of ZANU. Mugabe and Muzorewa, along with Joshua Nkomo, as will be seen, were to become the triumvirate of Zimbabwean nationalist leaders.

The black nationalist guerrilla effort went through a number of transitions between UDI and 1972. The realization by the guerrillas of the political and military strength of the Smith regime forced the guerrilla armies to change both their overall strategy and their tactics between 1966 and 1972. Strategically, very early in the phase, the guerrillas came to realize that they would not be able to force a British military intervention in Rhodesia by bringing about a breakdown of law and order. Consequently, they accepted the fact that independence and majority rule would not come about through British military intervention, but only through the military and political defeat of the Rhodesian Front regime by the nationalist forces. In regard to the tactics, in ZIPRA and ZANLA there was a change from quasi-conventional warfare to classical guerrilla warfare. The guerrillas knew by 1969 that they could not hope to defeat the might of the Rhodesian security forces in decisive military engagements. Consequently, the guerrillas began to avoid conventional battle with the security forces and started to use classic hit-and-run guerrilla tactics. An important part of these guerrilla tactics would be the politicization of the indigenous population which had been sorely neglected during the earlier stages of the armed struggle.

Although the nationalist organizations had adopted guerrilla warfare as a means to independence and majority rule



in the early 1960's, they had not ruled out the possibility of British military intervention. Shortly after UDI, the nationalists had viewed guerrilla activity as a means of provoking British intervention because the British had said that only a breakdown of law and order would cause them to intervene militarily. Thus, before 1966, guerrillas were not being used to wage an armed struggle to win national liberation, but as a means of intimidating Smith and Wilson into concluding a settlement favorable to the nationalists. Consequently, a number of small guerrilla bands, most of which were trained abroad, were infiltrated into the country, under the auspices of ZANU and ZAPU, to harass the Smith regime. The Crocodile Commando was an example of such a group. Nevertheless, when it became apparent that the Rhodesian Front government would not give an inch and that the British government would not intervene militarily, the nationalists decided that they would have to use their guerrilla forces to overthrow the white regime to achieve independence and majority rule.

Immediately after UDI, the infiltration of guerrilla bands into Rhodesia intensified. On 1 April 1966, a group of thirteen or fourteen ZANLA guerrillas crossed the Zambezi River by canoe and entered Rhodesia. This force broke into three groups. Two of the groups went to Umtali and Fort Victoria, respectively, with arms, explosives and pamphlets. Both groups were captured within two weeks by the Rhodesian security forces, although not without a struggle. The third group was captured during an attempted attack on the town of Sinoia on the night of 27--28 April 1966. [Ref. 23] In May, ZIPRA also infiltrated guerrillas into Rhodesia and operated in the Binga area west of Lake Kariba and in Bulawayo. The ZIPRA guerrillas participated in a number of acts of sabotage, but like their ZANLA counterparts, inevitably



ended up on the short end of the stick when they made contact with the Rhodesian security forces. Throughout 1966, both ZANLA and ZIPRA continued to infiltrate small bands of guerrillas into Rhodesia. The guerrillas participated in a number of relatively small and usually unsuccessful raids and acts of sabotage. Most of the guerrillas were either killed or captured by the Rhodesian security forces.

In 1967 and 1968, Rhodesian security forces and the nationalist guerrillas fought a series of conventional battles that not only caused the nationalists to modify their tactics but also resulted in a intensification of the divisions both within and between ZANU and ZAPU. The Wankie Battles, which occurred from July to September 1967, represented the first large-scale confrontation between the security forces and the guerrillas. In mid-1967, representatives of the African National Congress of South Africa (SAANC) met with representatives of ZAPU to discuss and plan cooperative military action against the Rhodesian security forces. As a result of these meetings, a ZAPU-SAANC alliance was formed. In late July 1967, a joint ZAPU-SAANC guerrilla force of about eighty men crossed the Zambezi River west of Victoria Falls and moved into Rhodesia's Wankie Game Reserve. Shortly after their entry into the country, the presence of the guerrillas was discovered by the security forces. In late July and early August a number of clashes occurred between the guerrillas and Rhodesian Army patrols. As Oliver Tambo, the Deputy President-General of the SAANC, and James Chikerema, the acting president of ZAPU, had issued a joint statement on 19 August 1967 confirming the ZAPU-SAANC alliance, the Rhodesian Front government felt compelled to ask the South African government for assistance in fighting the guerrillas





lest Rhodesian security forces be stretched too thin. South Africa responded by sending a contingent of para-military police and a number of helicopters to Rhodesia to back up the security forces. In a series of clashes between the security forces and the guerrillas from mid-August to late September, nearly all of the guerrillas were either killed or captured.

The Wankie Battles were significant for a number of reasons. First, they demonstrated that the guerrillas could not hope to succeed in a one-to-one conventional confrontation with the security forces, particularly when the security forces were backed up by Rhodesian close air support and South African police and helicopters. Although the guerrillas fought well and inflicted light to moderate casualties on the security forces, they had neither the command structure nor the sophisticated weaponry with which to defeat the security forces in a set battle. Second, the alliance between ZAPU and the SAANC widened the rift between ZAPU and ZANU. ZANU felt that the SAANC should have stayed in South Africa to fight the white regime in that country instead of provoking the South Africans into sending forces into Rhodesia to kill Zimbabwean nationalists. In arguing against the ZAPU/SAANC alliance, ZANU made the following statement:

In guerrilla warfare we must strive to spread the enemy forces so that we can wipe them out one by one. The greatest help we can get from ANC is for ANC to wage intensive guerrilla warfare in South Africa. If ANC can pin down the whole South African force within South Africa, then Zimbabweans shall be left with Smith alone without South African aid ... As it is now, the ANC and PCC-ZAPU alliance has made it easy for Smith and Vorster to unite and concentrate their forces to slaughter Zimbabweans. [Ref. 24]

In South Africa, the SAANC's rival, the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) also criticized the joint ZAPU-SAANC alliance when it declared that:





You cannot hope to gobble up a regular army, all at once in a conventional style war, as our brothers tried to do, and still claim to be waging guerrilla warfare. It is wholly unacceptable both in theory and practice. [Ref. 25]

According to Anthony A. Wilkinson, the debate between ZANU and ZAPU which was sparked by the Wankie failure points out one of the main theoretical and practical differences between the two rival nationalist organizations. ZANU, on the one hand, believed that the liberation of southern Africa could only be obtained through the simultaneous revolt by blacks in all the countries under white minority rule. ZAPU, on the other hand, felt that the liberation struggle should "be approached as a project to be achieved in geographic stages--first Mozambique, then Angola, and in the end South Africa." [Ref. 26]

The Wankie failure also emphasized to the guerrilla leaders the need of obtaining the support of the indigenous population if they hoped to win the guerrilla struggle. ZAPU/ZIPRA had failed to prepare the way for the guerrilla struggle inside Rhodesia. The native population had not been politicized. Trustworthy collaborators had not been identified nor informers cultivated. Food, weapons, and ammunition caches were not in place. Consequently, when the guerrillas were being pressured by the security forces, the local population, which was the very object of the liberation struggle, was of little or no assistance. In fact, the local population was often a hindrance to the guerrillas as the security forces had cultivated many informers among them.

The second group of battles to be fought between the security forces and the guerrillas were the Zambezi Escarpment Battles which lasted from December 1967 to April 1968. Having learned from their mistakes in the Wankie Battles, the ZAPU-SAANC high command had dispatched several



reconnaissance elements to the vicinity of the Chigwasa River to establish base camps for the main body which was to follow. During December 1967 and January 1968, approximately 150 ZAPU-SAANC guerrillas infiltrated from Zambia across the Zambezi into Rhodesia. Again the presence of the guerrillas was discovered by the security forces. Between January and April, the guerrillas, which had broken up into a number of small bands, were constantly pursued by the security forces and again most of them were either killed or captured. But the fact that this time it took the security forces four months instead two months to eliminate the guerrillas indicates that there were two factors working in the guerrillas' favor. First, the guerrillas had evidently gained the support and loyalty of some of the local population. Second, ZANU, probably desiring to take advantage of the confusion caused by the ZAPU-SAANC guerrillas in eastern Rhodesia, began activities in other areas of the country. This caused the security forces to spread themselves much thinner than before.

The Kariba Battles of July and August 1968 involved mostly SAANC guerrillas. On 12 and 13 July, a total of ninety-one revolutionaries infiltrated across the Zambezi and made their way to an area the other side of Kariba. Within a month, Rhodesian security forces had killed or captured all of the guerrillas. During that same period, ZANU also attempted to infiltrate fourteen guerrillas into Rhodesia. The guerrillas were engaged by the security forces on 7 August as they were crossing Lake Kariba and all of them were killed or captured during the next ten days.

There was very little guerrilla activity in 1969. This was probably due to the severe defeats suffered by the nationalist guerrillas in 1967 and 1968. In early January 1970, approximately 100 ZAPU guerrillas infiltrated into the



Victoria Falls region of Rhodesia. These guerrillas launched several moderately successful attacks on several Rhodesian and South African security force units and one installation. Nevertheless, by early February, most of the guerrillas had been tracked down and eliminated by the security forces.

ZAPU was not reported as being involved in any guerrilla activity in 1971. The ZANU underground, which had been relatively inactive from 1968 through 1970, began to take more action in 1971. Throughout 1971, Rhodesian security forces intercepted ZANLA guerrillas attempting to smuggle arms, ammunition, and explosives. In addition, a number of caches of ammunition and explosives were uncovered in Salisbury. During this period, ZANU also made a concerted effort to recruit Zimbabweans for guerrilla training in Zambia. A number of school teachers were arrested and convicted of indoctrinating their students in the nationalist ideology and of planning to take some of their students out of the country over the holiday periods for guerrilla training. In any event, the level of ZANU guerrilla activity from 1968 to 1971 never did reach the level of activity by ZAPU. [Ref. 27]

ZANU's guerrilla movement was torn during this period by a number of internal divisions that made successful guerrilla action difficult. One of the earliest signs of the problems within the ZANU guerrilla movement was, as mentioned earlier, the denunciation of the guerrilla movement by the ZANU president, Ndabaningi Sithole, at his trial in 1969. The ZANLA guerrillas particularly objected to Sithole's reference to them as terrorists when he said:

I want to disassociate my name in thought, word, deed, from any subversive activities, from any terrorist activities and from any form of violence  
[Ref. 28].





ZANU also suffered another major problem. ZANU had always claimed to be the most militant and revolutionary of the nationalist organizations. Yet, from 1966 to 1971, the level of guerrilla activity by ZANU was much lower than that of ZAPU. Richard Gibson has written that:

In ZANU's case, with great emphasis placed on militancy, it was also inevitable that some leaders and rank and file members should feel after a relatively short while that the struggle was not proceeding towards victory at a rapid enough pace. Complaints were raised about alleged "bourgeoise leaders" in Lusaka. [Ref. 29]

A number of ZANU guerrillas and ZANU students living abroad felt that the ZANU party leadership was hiding out in Zambia. They felt that the party leaders should undergo military training and return to Zimbabwe to lead the guerrilla freedom fighters.

The final straw that broke the camel's back came in October 1971 at the ZANU Delegate Conference which was held near Lusaka, Zambia. ZANU announced that it was discontinuing negotiations with ZAPU because it was impossible to talk to an organization (ZAPU) that had so many divisions. This announcement was accompanied by a reorganization of the ZANU leadership in which the members of the Central Committee, led by Nathan Shamuyarira, who supported continued negotiations with ZAPU, were ousted from the conference. Shamuyarira's bloc of dissidents included many of those who believed that the ZANU leadership was not militant enough.

As was alluded to earlier, ZAPU was also suffering from a number of internal conflicts. Largely because of the defeats suffered in 1967 and 1968, there was a lack of confidence by the rank and file ZIPRA guerrillas in the ZAPU leadership. Also, ZAPU suffered from low morale and communications problems because of the imprisonment of Joshua Nkomo. Nkomo and his two main lieutenants were kept in two



separate prisons inside Rhodesia. Because of very tight security measures, they were unable to communicate between themselves or with the remainder of the ZAPU leadership in Lusaka. As a result, by 1969, rumors were flying. Accusations were made that the guerrilla commanders were spending their time in Lusaka fraternizing with women and using guerrilla labor to build homes for themselves. In addition, there were disagreements along ethnic lines. Disputes arose with Chikerema, the acting president, and Nyandoro, the secretary-general, who were both Shona, on one side, and Moyo, the treasurer, Silundika, in charge of publicity, and Ndlovu, the assistant secretary, who were all Sindebele-speaking Kalanga, on the other side. In January 1970, Chikerema offended part of the ZAPU leadership and embarrassed the Zambian government when he gave permission to a television film crew to interview a guerrilla group on the Zambia side of the Zambezi River. In February 1970, Moyo issued "Observations on Our Struggle," in which he criticized Chikerema's leadership. In this article, Moyo expressed concern at the poor state of ZAPU's command structure, discipline, organization, training, recruitment, and intelligence [Ref. 30]. Several days later, Chikerema rebutted Moyo's accusations with "Reply to Observations on Our Struggle." He asserted that Joshua Nkomo had vested the power of the ZAPU presidency in him during Nkomo's imprisonment and took control of all party functions, to include finance. Chikerema also accused Moyo and his associates of planning a coup against him. [Ref. 31]

In April, Moyo's group conceded Chikerema's authority with the proviso that Chikerema could only act with the approval of the ZAPU Executive Committee. Throughout 1970, tensions continued between the Chikerema and Moyo factions. Finally, President Kaunda called the five ZAPU leaders



together and demanded that they start to work together or face the prospect of being deported from Zambia. At this time, the ZAPU leaders made an effort to cooperate.

The truce between the two ZAPU factions was broken in June 1970 when Chikerema began talks with Nathan Shamuyarira of ZANU to discuss the unification of ZANU and ZAPU. These talks accelerated in December 1970 when a report came from Salisbury that the imprisoned Sithole and Nkomo had agreed to step down from the presidencies of their respective parties to permit Robert Mugabe, the detained Secretary-General of ZANU, to become president of a new party that would unite ZANU and ZAPU. Chikerema's opponents within ZAPU opposed these unification discussions. This feud within ZAPU manifested itself in a number of violent confrontations and kidnappings. In early 1971, President Kaunda in order to maintain civil order, deported to Rhodesia a number of ZAPU members who were promptly arrested, tried, and convicted by the Rhodesian government.

Thus, by late 1971, both ZANU and ZAPU were divided in to two factions, one wanting to maintain the status quo by keeping ZANU and ZAPU separate and the other wanting to more aggressively prosecute the guerrilla war by uniting ZANU and ZAPU. In October 1971, the Shamuyarira faction of ZANU and the Chikerema faction of ZAPU broke away from their parent organizations and merged to form the Front for the Liberation of Zimbabwe (FROLIZI). The Chairman of FROLIZI was Shelton Ziwela, an ex-ZIPRA guerrilla who had participated in two missions into Rhodesia. The Secretary was Godfrey Savanhu, a former ZANU member. James Chikerema, Nathan Shamuyarira, and George Nyandoro were all on the FROLIZI council. As would be expected, Zambia welcomed the formation of FROLIZI. Both ZANU and ZAPU denounced FROLIZI while the OAU was hesitant to give official recognition to a third nationalist/guerrilla organization.





A comparison of the strategies and goals of ZANU, ZAPU, and FROLIZI as of 1971 is very enlightening. By 1971, ZANU had abandoned the strategy of direct confrontation with the Rhodesian Army. Instead, greater emphasis was to be placed upon the political education of the workers and peasants in Zimbabwe. The purposes of this change in emphasis were to gain the support of the masses and to recruit more people for guerrilla training. The strategic aim of ZANU was to demoralize white Rhodesians and cripple the Rhodesian economy by forcing the Rhodesian government to draw civilian manpower away from industry, agriculture, and business to fill the ranks of the army which would be tied down fighting small guerrilla bands in many parts of the country.

ZAPU advanced a similar strategy. ZAPU believed that the white settler power was based in a large, well-equipped army, a good transportation network, and communications facilities. ZAPU, like ZANU, also realized that the white regime was financing these things with industry and trade. Consequently, instead of trying to tie down the security forces, ZAPU concentrated its efforts on acts of sabotage against industrial, transportation, and communications facilities, the use of land mines, and limited, well-planned armed attacks. Although it was the philosophy of both ZANU and ZAPU to avoid decisive engagements, ZAPU's tactics were much more risk-free.

FROLIZI advocated tactics that were similar to those of both ZANU and ZAPU. However, FROLIZI espoused a more revolutionary strategy. To FROLIZI, a true, national, and democratic revolution was the ultimate goal. A simple transfer of power would not suffice.

In late 1971, FROLIZI's immediate goal was still to unite ZANU and ZAPU. Ironically, it was to have very little to do with the unification. At a meeting of the OAU



Liberation Committee in January 1972, ZANU and ZAPU made a joint declaration of their intent to unite. FROLIZI was to be asked to join this united front later. The OAU declared that it would give money only to this united front. In a February 1972 meeting of the OAU Liberation Committee, ZANU and ZAPU agreed to form a Joint Military Command (JMC). The JMC was to be responsible for planning and conducting all aspects of the "revolutionary" war. Ultimately, FROLIZI never was allowed to join the united front, but the OAU gave money to both the JMC and FROLIZI.

FROLIZI held a conference in August 1972 at which James Chikerema was elected Chairman and Stephen Parienyatwa was elected Secretary. FROLIZI never was able to become a viable guerrilla or political organization. Torn internally by ethnic rivalries, its guerrilla activities were extremely limited. As a result, by June 1973 it had virtually collapsed. Three members of FROLIZI's seven-man national executive and another nineteen ordinary members rejoined ZANU. Among them were Nathan Shamuyarira and G.G. Parirewa. In November 1973, the OAU Liberation Committee finally rejected FROLIZI's application for membership.



#### IV. FROM CONFLICT TO A SETTLEMENT

##### A. RHODESIAN FRONT GOVERNMENT-NATIONALIST NEGOTIATIONS AND NATIONALIST SPLITS: 1972 - 1978

Phase IV of the Rhodesian crisis, which lasted from June 1972 through March 1978, was the most important period in the Zimbabwean nationalist struggle. Beginning with the emergence of Bishop Abel Muzorewa's ANC as the most influential nationalist organization and culminating with an internal "settlement" between the Smith regime and Bishop Muzorewa, this period was significant because of the development of events and trends that would determine the final outcome in Rhodesia. The first significant event in this period was the virtual withdrawal of the British government from the negotiating process after the failure of the Anglo-Rhodesian Accord in the Spring of 1972. The British would not re-enter the negotiating process as active participants until late 1976. This change in the Anglo-Rhodesian negotiating relationship was in many ways the crucial turning point in the nationalist struggle.

Because of the successful campaign mounted against the Anglo-Rhodesian Accord by Muzorewa's ANC and because of the British withdrawal from the negotiating process, Ian Smith finally came to the realization that any settlement would have to include the nationalist leaders. Consequently, Smith began negotiations with Muzorewa in early 1973. Nevertheless, Smith's willingness to negotiate with the nationalists was not motivated so much by altruism as it was by pragmatism. For although Smith gave the outward appearance of negotiating seriously with the nationalists, in reality he was not doing this. In fact, Smith used the





negotiations with the various nationalist leaders between 1973 and 1977 as a means of playing upon the divisions within and between the nationalist organizations.

At various times during this phase, Smith negotiated with Muzorewa, Sithole, and Nkomo. But never did he negotiate with the nationalist leader who had, at the time, the backing of the majority of the nationalist organizations, popular support, or, most importantly, the power and the authority to speak for the black majority. Through this strategy of divide and conquer, Smith hoped, at the very least, to get a settlement that would insure a privileged position for the white minority and, hopefully, maintain the status quo indefinitely.

Indirectly, Smith's actions would determine who would be the future leader of Zimbabwe. The divide and conquer strategy had the effect of making Muzorewa, Nkomo, and Sithole change their positions on a number of issues. Consequently, at different times each one of them appeared to be an inconsistent opportunist whose basic motives, credibility, and sincerity were very much in question. Throughout this period, only Robert Mugabe would refuse "to blow with the wind" and it would be his unyielding consistency and a strict adherence to a basic set of principles and goals that would insure his ultimate victory. Out of this internal bickering and distrust, ZANU would emerge as the most powerful Zimbabwean nationalist organization, and it would be ZANLA that would carry on an intensified and successful guerrilla war during the final years of the nationalist struggle.

Finally, the significance of the 1974 Portuguese coup and subsequent transfer of power in Mozambique to a new FRELIMO government in 1975 cannot be underestimated. The existence of a government, who had itself been a nationalist



guerrilla organization only a few months earlier, adjacent to and sympathetic to the nationalist cause, had a dramatic influence on the negotiating process, the struggles within the nationalist movement, and the guerrilla war.

In late 1972 and early 1973, Bishop Abel Muzorewa's ANC began preliminary negotiations with the Smith regime. Although the ANC was opposed to guerrilla warfare and violent revolution, it was nevertheless unyielding in its demands for immediate majority rule. Initially, Smith attempted to circumvent the ANC by dealing only with his own hand-picked group of African leaders and organizations. But as the ANC's influence and ability to organize popular support increased, Smith gave up these tactics and began dealing with Muzorewa. Thus, because the ANC was the only nationalist party officially recognized by the RFG and because it was the only nationalist organization that could operate overtly and legally within Rhodesia, Muzorewa's power and influence increased dramatically. Muzorewa hoped that the fact that the ANC was based inside of Rhodesia would serve as his ace in the hole during the negotiating efforts.

Although the nationalist guerrilla organizations outside of Zimbabwe (ZANU, ZAPU, and FROLIZI) had supported Muzorewa's campaign against the Anglo-Rhodesian Proposals of 1972, they were denouncing his negotiations with the Rhodesian Front government. The more radical nationalist organizations did not agree with Muzorewa's strategy of achieving democratic rule through non-violent means. They still felt that violent revolution was the only means of getting independence and majority rule in Rhodesia-Zimbabwe. In addition, ZANU, ZAPU, and FROLIZI were still wasting precious effort on verbal attacks on one another, each one claiming to be more radical than the other two organizations.



The situation was further complicated by the weak linkages between the guerrilla and political wings of the nationalist organizations. The JMC had never gotten off the ground. ZANU and ZAPU did not make any sincere effort to coordinate military planning and operations. By 1973, ZANU was very far advanced in infiltrating guerrillas into Rhodesia and setting up a political infrastructure in the Rhodesian country-side. ZANU leaders felt that joint military operations with ZAPU would only serve to slow their own progress. In March 1973, an OAU conciliation council persuaded ZAPU and ZANU to form a joint military and political council. As might have been expected, this organization was no more effective than the JMC, and both ZANLA and ZIPRA continued to go their own independent, uncoordinated ways.

In addition to this split between ZANU and ZAPU, there was an additional split between the ZANU political leaders and the ZANLA guerrilla commanders. The military leaders, Rex Nhongo and Josiah Tongogara, refused to subordinate their guerrilla army to the ZANU political leaders and did not acknowledge Sithole as the legitimate leader of ZANU. They felt that, since they had the military power, that they also had de facto political power.

Muzorewa and Smith began unofficial discussions during the first several months of 1973, the first official talks not occurring until 17 July 1973. Throughout these discussions, which lasted into 1974, Muzorewa stuck to the principle of immediate majority rule while Smith was unyielding in his demand that the nationalists would have to accept the 1971 Anglo-Rhodesian Proposals. Smith totally rejected all ANC demands to end racial discrimination in land tenure, education, franchise, and the civil service and to free political detainees on the grounds that the 1971 proposals





were not negotiable. Partly as a reaction to increasing pressure from the guerrillas and partly to pressure the ANC to accept the 1971 proposals, Smith introduced a number of repressive laws in 1973 and 1974.

In a 20 March 1974 letter from six imprisoned members of ZANU's central committee, including Sithole and Mugabe, Muzorewa was condemned for conducting negotiations with an illegal regime and asked to terminate all discussions with the Smith government. The ANC gave Muzorewa a mandate to reach an agreement with Smith that would provide for unimpeded progress towards majority rule. By March 1974, Smith was still refusing to budge from the 1971 proposals. The ANC rejected Smith's offers and on 20 June 1974 Muzorewa suspended the constitutional talks. At this time, Smith leaked information that was intended to undermine Muzorewa's credibility with the nationalists. Smith claimed that Muzorewa had agreed to the 1971 proposals. Muzorewa denied the accusations saying that he had only agreed to the 1971 proposals as a "basis for negotiation." In September 1974, Smith produced a document signed by Bishop Muzorewa which stated that "Bishop Muzorewa, in his capacity as President of the African National Council, gave an understanding that he accepted the 1971 proposals for a settlement and that he would urge the British government, on behalf of the African people, to implement the proposals." [Ref. 32] This agreement had been signed on 17 August 1973 and the key phrase, "as a basis for negotiation (or discussion)," was missing from Smith's version of the agreement, which was reprinted in the Rhodesia Herald on 27 September 1974. This incident is probably best elucidated by Martin and Johnson in The Struggle for Zimbabwe:

On 15 October, in a circular distributed to ANC offices, the Bishop claimed that he had been cheated into signing the document. He said that he had initiated the talks, to which Smith had come with a prepared statement apparently under



the assumption that the ANC had changed their minds over the 1971 settlement proposals and were now willing to accept them. This was not the case. "When Mr. Smith produced the prepared statement for signing, we signed, but I said that the 1971 settlement proposals could only form the basis for discussion. I asked Mr. Smith to amend his copy of the document and I believed he had done so in the presence of the two witnesses." One of the witnesses, Chad Chipunza, an uncle of Muzorewa and a conservative politician from Federal days, who favoured a settlement based upon the 1971 proposals, issued a statement saying he was amazed at the bishop's claim that he had been cheated and suggested Muzorewa should gracefully retire from politics and shepherd his flock. Even taking into account Muzorewa's political ineptitude, it is incredible that he should have signed an agreement which went totally against the African opinion expressed to the Pearce Commission. Even more incredible, or perhaps merely naive, is the fact--even if he really meant to include the phrase that the proposals were only a "basis for discussion"--he signed the document before ensuring that it had been inserted. [Ref. 33]

Meanwhile, events in Portugal had had a dramatic effect on the situation in Rhodesia. On 25 April 1974, the Portuguese armed forces conducted a successful coup d'etat against the government of Dr. Caetano. The primary reasons for the coup were the disillusionment and war weariness of the Portuguese Army over the counterinsurgencies in Guinea Bissau, Angola, and Mozambique and the rampant inflation in Portugal. The coup affected the situation in Rhodesia in three ways. First of all, the Portuguese-South Africa-Rhodesia alliance against nationalist guerrillas was about to be broken up. It was obvious that Portugal was withdrawing from Africa. South Africa, who had economic involvement in Mozambique, was faced with the prospect of having to develop a good working relationship with a new (probably FRELIMO) government in Mozambique. The Vorster government had given immediate recognition to the new Portuguese government. In addition, the South African forces were starting to take heavier casualties in Rhodesia. Consequently, it was very possible, from Ian Smith's point of view, that South African support for his counterinsurgency would wane.





Secondly, the Smith regime was faced with the prospect of hostile governments on two of its borders. Indeed, in 1975 FRELIMO came to power in Mozambique and the MPLA came to power in Angola, giving the Zimbabwean guerrillas increased sources of sanctuary, supply, and assistance. Finally, involvement and failure in Angola would ultimately cause both the United States and South Africa to pressure Ian Smith to seriously negotiate a solution to the Rhodesian dilemma.

By mid-1974, Prime Minister Vorster of South Africa realized that it was in South Africa's best interests to defuse the situation in Rhodesia. Vorster felt that the Portuguese coup d'etat and the likelihood of a FRELIMO government coming into power in Mozambique made the Smith regime's military defeat inevitable unless a constitutional solution could be worked out in Rhodesia. Indeed, the changed situation in Mozambique was the primary factor influencing Vorster's attitudes and policies towards Rhodesia. South Africa's dependence upon Mozambique's seaports, labor, and hydroelectric power would require Vorster to develop a working relationship with the new government in Mozambique. Also, Vorster felt that he had to do something to defuse the popular appeal of radical black leaders such as FRELIMO's Samora Machel. Thus, Vorster hoped that by assisting in a settlement of the Rhodesian problem and aiding, rather than hindering, Mozambique's transition to an independent government, he might be able to obtain the respect of the moderate black states and possibly revive his dream of a South African dominated southern African economic community.

If Vorster was going to have any hope of success in pressuring Smith to work for a constitutional settlement, he would need an ally among one of the African states to apply





the same type of pressure upon the nationalist guerrillas and to act as an intermediary between Smith and the nationalists. Countries such as Malawi, Senegal, and Ivory Coast were out of consideration because their close relations with South Africa and the former colonial powers gave them little credibility with the guerrillas. Julius Nyerere of Tanzania was out because since 1971 he had consistently opposed all negotiations between nationalists and the illegal Smith regime and because he was still providing the guerrillas with rear base training facilities. It was also unlikely that Vorster could hope for any help from Machel's FRELIMO, which was still a radical Marxist guerrilla movement and assisting in the infiltration of ZANLA guerrillas through Tete Province into Rhodesia. The only alternative left to Vorster was Zambia, who, although still allowing ZIPRA guerrillas to infiltrate from Tanzania through Zambian territory, had the most to gain economically and politically, from a Rhodesian settlement.

Representatives of Vorster's government met secretly with representatives of Kaunda's government in New York in early October 1974. Zambia asked South Africa if she would be willing to help get rid of the Smith regime and help bring about majority rule and independence in Rhodesia. The Zambian government also asked if the South Africans would be willing to allow the UN to assume responsibility for guiding Namibia towards independence. The South Africans replied that they would be willing to assist in a negotiated settlement in Rhodesia as long as there was a guaranteed transition period in Rhodesia and a guarantee that, once Zimbabwe was independent, it would not be used as a base for guerrilla attacks on South Africa. On 8 October 1974, the Zambian government in Lusaka drafted a document that was to be come known as the "Detente Scenario." Entitled "Towards



the Summit: An Approach to Peaceful Change in Southern Africa," the most important provisions of this document were as follows:

1. Zambia agreed to work for a peaceful solution in Rhodesia, along with the governments of Tanzania, Botswana, and Mozambique as long as such a solution would provide for freedom and justice for all people, regardless of race, color, creed, or ethnic group.

2. Zambia and the other Frontline States would not support an increase in the war effort if peaceful conditions are possible.

3. The Zambian, Tanzanian, Botswanan, and Mozambiquen governments would agree to a summit with the Vorster government only if its objectives were clearly defined.

4. South Africa was to promise to recognize de jure the new FRELIMO government and promise to support it politically, economically, and financially.

5. South Africa was to prevent attacks upon Mozambique by mercenaries based in Rhodesia and South Africa.

6. South Africa was to initiate action to renegotiate terms on harbors, railways, and port charges, the supply of hydroelectric power from Cabora Bassa, migrant labor, and any other South African interests in Mozambique.

7. Mozambique would reaffirm its policy of non-aggression against South Africa and would not allow its territory to be used as a base for mercenaries or insurgents attacking into South Africa.

8. Mozambique would not interfere in the internal affairs of other independent countries, including South Africa.

9. South Africa would advise the Smith regime that a political solution to the Rhodesian problem is "most negotiable and urgent."

10. South Africa would not interfere in Rhodesia's internal affairs and would withdraw all security personnel and equipment for Rhodesia.

11. South Africa would declare that a negotiated settlement was in Rhodesia's best interests and that it was against any further escalation of the war.

The above conditions of the "Detente Scenario" were to be met by the end of November. Vorster had no trouble doing so. In addition, the South African government was to ensure that the Rhodesian government moved rapidly towards a



constitutional conference by implementing the following six points:

1. Releasing all political detainees and prisoners since their voice is both credible and final in any negotiations. In this connection, Mr. Joshua Nkomo, Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole and their lieutenants command tremendous influence and will for a long time remain the voice of reason;

2. Lifting the ban on ZAPU and ZANU and the restrictions of movements on leaders so that they participate fully and constructively in the search for a just political solution as an alternative to the current armed struggles;

3. Suspend political trials and revoke death sentences for political offenders;

4. Suspend all politically discriminatory legislation;

5. Gearing the SAG (South African Government) administration to help defuse racial tension and create a political climate for the acceptance of the proposal of the constitutional conference representing ZAPU and ZANU, the Rhodesian Front, and other political parties in Rhodesia under British chairmanship. In these circumstances the current armed struggle will be replaced by a new spirit of cooperation and racial harmony which is the foundation for political stability and therefore justifying withdrawal of the South African security forces;

6. SAG to make it clear that they will support any legally constituted government irrespective of its racial composition in Rhodesia. [Ref. 34]

Zambia and her "friends" (Tanzania, Botswana, and Mozambique) in turn promised to publicly welcome these moves by the South African and Rhodesian governments and to use their influence to ensure that ZANU and ZAPU cease the armed struggle and work towards a political solution to the problem.

In regard to Namibia, South Africa was asked to reaffirm its policy of self-determination in accordance with the will of the majority, to recognize SWAPO as a political organization in Namibia, to cease physical abuse of prisoners, and to encourage ex-patriot Namibians to return to the country to participate in the political process. It should be noted that the "Detente Scenario" did not ask South Africa to





release Namibian political prisoners, to acknowledge Walvis Bay as an integral part of Namibia, or to allow the UN to carry out the process of Namibia's decolonization. In return, Zambia and her "friends" would ask SWAPO to cease violent activity and to register itself as a legitimate political party opposed to violent change, provided South Africa allowed it to do so.

All of these commitments in the "Detente Scenario" were to be met by mid-December 1974 when a summit conference would be held between Vorster and Kaunda (and hopefully the other Frontline leaders). Unfortunately, the conference was cancelled when Vorster was unable to keep his part of the agreement. He had to postpone his plans to withdraw South African military personnel from Rhodesia.

Nevertheless, Vorster was able to convince Smith to release the detained nationalist leaders to go to a conference with the leaders of the Frontline States in Lusaka in November 1974. It wasn't just the pressure from Vorster that had caused Smith to release the nationalist leaders. In 1974 in Rhodesia security forces had started taking much heavier casualties. The ratio of guerrillas to security forces killed was five to one, which was unacceptable in a guerrilla war and in a country where blacks outnumbered whites twenty to one. ZANLA's change in strategy was taking its toll against the security forces. In addition, when the nine-month transition period preceding an independent Mozambique was over in June 1975, the Rhodesian Front government would be facing a hostile FRELIMO government on one of its borders. Thus, it was to Smith's advantage to free the imprisoned nationalist leaders in the hope that they would agree to a ceasefire that would eliminate the military threat to the Smith regime.



On 1 November 1974, Ndabaningi Sithole was, while in prison, suspended as the president of ZANU by the imprisoned ZANU Executive Committee. There were several reasons for Sithole's suspension. The central committee was still enraged at Sithole's denunciation of the armed struggle at his 1969 trial. In 1974, Sithole refused to appear before the ZANU central committee to answer questions about his 1969 denunciation. Also in 1974, Sithole had had several discussions with Rhodesian special branch officers. Consequently, he was suspected by the other ZANU leaders of being a "quisling." Finally, the straw that broke the camel's back was Sithole's statement that "one-man, one-vote" was not an immediate goal but merely a slogan to be used in mobilization and negotiations. In the 1 November vote on Sithole's suspension, Tekere, Nkala, and Nyagumbo voted for the suspension while Mugabe abstained from voting. Malianga, as chairman, did not vote but opposed Sithole's suspension on the grounds that it was unconstitutional without a meeting of the ZANU Congress. [Ref. 35]

When Zambian government officials arrived in Salisbury on 8 November 1974 to pick up Sithole for the Lusaka conference, they were instead met by Mugabe and Malianga. The ZANU central committee had decided that Mugabe, the General-Secretary, and Malianga, the Secretary for Youth and Culture, should replace Sithole in Lusaka. Arriving in Lusaka, Mugabe and Malianga, who were unknown to the Frontline State leaders, were confronted by Kaunda, Nyerere, and Machel. Accused of instigating a coup in prison and of acting against the ZANU constitution, they were prevented from contacting their ZANU colleagues in Lusaka, placed under house arrest over night, and unceremoniously flown back to detention in Rhodesia the next morning.



On 12 November 1974, Kaunda called Sithole to Lusaka, either as a private individual or as the ZANU president. In Lusaka, Kaunda told Sithole that while the Frontline State leaders did not want to impose Sithole's leadership upon ZANU, ZANU ran the risk of losing the support of the Frontline States if it did not resolve its internal crisis. Sithole met with five members of the ZANLA war council, the Dare re Chimurenga (DARE); Nyangumbo, who had been in prison with Sithole, Chitepo, the ZANU National Chairman who had been in Zambia, Mudzi, the Administrative Secretary, Tongogara, the Chief of Defense, and Matuare, the Political Commisar. Tongogara stated that the decision to suspend Sithole had endangered ZANU training facilities in Tanzania and Chitepo expressed the opinion that Kaunda might use the suspension as an excuse to throw ZANU out of Zambia. The six leaders came to the conclusion that Sithole had been betrayed by the executive committee and that Nyangumbo should return to Que Que Prison to convince them to change their minds. Meanwhile, Sithole and his associates flew to Tanzania where they were assured by Nyerere of his continued support of ZANU. Upon arriving in Mozambique, Machel told them that he would arrest every guerrilla in Mozambique if the ZANU executive committee did not change its decision on Sithole's suspension. After much criticism by Nkala and Tekere at Que Que, Nyagumbo was able to convince the executive committee to adopt a resolution suspending the effect of Sithole's suspension pending a final decision by the congress. [Ref. 36]

With Sithole reinstated as ZANU's president, the Frontline state leaders were free to concentrate on the larger and more critical problems of uniting the ANC, ZANU, ZAPU, and FROLIZI and initiating a peace summit with Rhodesia. Between 3 and 8 December 1974, meetings were





held in Lusaka between the Frontline State leaders (Samora Machel of Mozambique, Seretse Khama of Botswana, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, and Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia) and the leaders of the ANC (Muzorewa), ZANU (Sithole), ZAPU (Nkomo), and FROLIZI (Chikerema). As a result of these discussions, on 7 December 1974 the nationalist leaders agreed to dissolve their individual organizations and to form a united front under the name African National Council (ANC). Bishop Muzorewa was appointed the president of the new ANC. The organization and functions of this new ANC were explained in the "Zimbabwe Declaration of Unity" of 7 December 1974:

ZANU, ZAPU, FROLIZI, and ANC hereby agree to unite in the ANC.

2. The parties recognize the ANC as the unifying force of the people of Zimbabwe.

(a) They agree to consolidate the leadership of the ANC by the inclusion into it of the presidents of ZANU, ZAPU, and FROLIZI under the chairmanship of the president of the ANC.

(b) ZAPU, ZANU, and FROLIZI shall each appoint three other persons to join the enlarged ANC executive.

4. The enlarged ANC executive shall have the following functions:

(a) To prepare for any conference for the transfer of power to the majority that might be called.

(b) To prepare for the holding of a congress within four months at which--

(i) A revised ANC constitution shall be adopted.

(ii) The leadership of the united people of Zimbabwe shall be elected;

(iii) A statement of policy for the new ANC will be considered.

(c) To organize the people for such conference and congress.

5. The leadership of the ZAPU, ZANU, and FROLIZI call upon their supporters and all Zimbabweans to rally behind the ANC under its enlarged executive.

6. ZAPU, ZANU, and FROLIZI will take steps to merge their respective organs and structures into the ANC before the congress to be held within four months.

7. The leaders recognize the inevitability of continued armed struggle until the total liberation of Zimbabwe.

Signed: Abel Tendekayi Muzorewa President of ANC  
Signed: Joshua Mqubuko Nkomo President of ZAPU  
Signed: Ndabaningi Sithole President of ZANU  
Signed: James Robert Chikerema President of FROLIZI



State House, Lusaka

[Ref. 37]

The "Salisbury Declaration " of 11 December 1974 further elaborated on the basic position and goals of the new ANC:

Recognizing the paramount need for unity in the Zimbabwe liberation struggle, the executive committees of ZAPU, ZANU, FROLIZI, and ANC have met in Lusaka to discuss the aims, objectives, and methods to be pursued. Full agreement was reached on the following points:

1. We have agreed to unite under one organization with immediate effect. We have agreed further, that this organization shall be the African National Council.

2. We shall be working for the independence of our country. We assume that on this demand for independence there is no difference among Rhodesians of all races. But there has until now been a difference on the kind of independence which Zimbabwe must have. The Rhodesian Front has, in the past, sought independence on the basis of minority rule. We reject that. The independence we still seek, is independence on the basis of majority rule.

3. For the purposes of achieving that objective we have always been ready to enter into negotiations with others concerned. Now that some of us have been released from detention, we believe the time is ripe for us to repeat this offer. Without pre-conditions on both sides we are ready to enter into immediate and meaningful negotiations with leaders of the Rhodesian Front, and with the British government in Britain, on the steps to be taken to achieve independence on the basis of majority rule.

4. As a demonstration of our sincerity, all freedom fighters will be instructed, as soon as a date for negotiation has been fixed, to suspend fighting.

5. We are not racialists. We accept the right of white Rhodesians to live in Rhodesia and share the same rights and obligations of citizenship as their fellow Rhodesians of the majority community, without any discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, or creed.

6. We call upon all Rhodesians, and all who reside in Rhodesia, to remain calm, maintain peace and to go about their normal business, while these matters are being considered, and while any negotiations are proceeding.

7. We call upon all Zimbabweans, wherever they are, to remain united behind the demand for independence on the basis of majority rule, and to give full support to the African National Council.





8. We appeal to all our friends in Africa and abroad to continue their support for our struggle until independence is achieved on the basis of majority rule.

Signed: Abel Tendekayi Muzorewa President of ANC  
Signed: Joshua Mqabuko Nkomo Former President of ZAPU  
Signed: Ndabaningi Sithole Former President of ZANU  
Signed: James Robert Dambadza Chikerema Former President of FROLIZI [Ref. 38]

It was clear from the Lusaka and Salisbury agreements that the new ANC was willing to negotiate directly with Smith's Rhodesian Front government in order to bring about a peace settlement and majority rule. This differed from the statements and policies of previous nationalist organizations who viewed the Smith government as an illegal regime that could not be negotiated with. Nevertheless, discussions between the Smith government and the new ANC were in trouble from the very start. Smith accused the nationalists of not enforcing the ceasefire which had been agreed upon as a precondition for any future talks. Additionally, Smith refused to attend talks outside of Rhodesia and refused to grant immunity from arrest to exiled nationalist leaders to allow them to attend talks within Rhodesia. After preliminary talks in Salisbury between the RFG and the ANC, a conference was finally held between the two parties in a railway car on the Victoria Falls Bridge on 26 August 1975. In spite of the personal efforts of both Kaunda and Vorster, the talks broke down soon after they began. The primary reason for the deadlock was Smith's refusal to even consider any transfer of power from minority to majority rule.

Realizing the futility of peaceful negotiations, the ANC had already begun to make preparations to renew and accelerate the guerrilla war. On 8 July 1975, ANC leaders had met in Dar es Salaam to establish the Zimbabwe Liberation Council (ZLC) and to send Muzorewa, Nkomo, Sithole, and Chikerema to visit guerrilla camps in Tanzania. The ZLC was





to be responsible for training and equipping the guerrillas and planning and carrying out the guerrilla war should the peace talks break down. As might have been expected the ZLC failed in its attempts to to coordinate the guerrilla effort due to the rivalries and factionalism within the nationalist movement. Ian Smith would go to great efforts to take advantage of this internal factionalism in the ANC and its sub-organizations in order to negotiate an internal settlement with what he felt were the more moderate and responsible and reasonable members of the nationalist movement.

The first split within the ANC that Smith was able to exploit was that between Bishop Muzorewa and Joshua Nkomo. Shortly after the breakdown of the Victoria Falls talks, disagreements between Muzorewa and Nkomo came to a head. On 11 September 1975, Muzorewa expelled Nkomo, who had aspirations of challenging Muzorewa's authority and heading the ANC himself, from the ANC for initiating independent discussions with and collaborating with the Smith government. In late September 1975, Nkomo held his own ANC congress, which was attended by six thousand delegates, including nearly two-thirds of the old ANC executive committee. On 28 September 1975, Nkomo was elected president of the ANC and shortly thereafter he began preliminary meetings with Smith to discuss the possibility of reopening formal negotiations. On 1 December 1975, Smith and Nkomo announced their intent to negotiate a constitutional settlement. This declaration to negotiate was immediately denounced by both Muzorewa and Sithole. Sithole declared that ZANLA guerrillas would begin anew the guerrilla war in Zimbabwe. As will be discussed shortly, Sithole's threat was meaningless as he no longer had control over the ZANLA forces.

Formal negotiations between Smith and Nkomo occurred during the first half of March 1976. During this period,



both the British and United States governments urged Smith to moderate his stand against majority rule. Nkomo proposed to Smith the creation of a 144-seat legislature with between 36 and 58 seats to be held by whites. Smith, on the other hand, wanted a three-tier assembly with one-third of the seats reserved for whites, one-third for blacks, and one-third selected by electors on a common role with high qualifications. The Rhodesian Front government felt that this system would insure white control of the majority of the assembly seats for at least ten to fifteen years. Nkomo and Smith failed to reach an agreement and the talks between them collapsed on 19 March 1976.

During this same period, the ANC was also being torn apart by a power struggle that was taking place between the leaders of ZANU and ZANLA. Although this rivalry within ZANU had been brewing for a long time, the split within ZANU was brought to a head on 10 March 1975 with the assassination in Zambia of Herbert Chitepo, the ZANU national chairman. Chitepo, a militant nationalist, had opposed the consolidation of all the nationalist organizations under the new ANC. He had also opposed the planned ceasefire and negotiations with the Rhodesian government. By early 1975, Chitepo's primary concerns were reinforcing and resupplying the ZANLA guerrillas fighting inside of Rhodesia. Consequently, this brought him into direct conflict with the Sithole wing of ZANU, the ANC, and the government of Zambia. In pursuance of a constitutional settlement, these three organizations had cut back on the assistance they had been giving to Chitepo and his ZANLA guerrillas. When Chitepo was murdered, a number of groups were accused of being responsible for his death, including the Rhodesian government, ZAPU, and Sithole's wing of ZANU. In order to prevent further violence and to prevent ZANLA from using Zambia as a base



from which to intensify the guerrilla war, on 23 March 1975 the Zambian government arrested most of the ZANU/ZANLA leaders who were residing in Zambia. Kaunda was not to release these leaders until 17 October 1976. The ultimate effect of the Chitepo assassination and the subsequent crack-down on ZANLA guerrillas in Zambia was to further factionalize both ZANU and the ANC.

On 10 May 1975, Sithole, in accordance with the Lusaka Unity Accord of December 1974, ordered ZANU to dissolve and to integrate into the new ANC. The ZANU DARE in Zambia refused to obey Sithole's orders and denounced the ANC, Sithole, and the peace negotiations. On 8 July 1975, Sithole attempted to regain his lost control over the ZANLA guerrilla forces by creating the ZLC, which was an alliance between ZANU and ZAPU. The more militant ZANU guerrilla leaders in Zambia opposed this Sithole-ANC effort and initiated what would turn out to be a complete break with Sithole and the ANC.

In mid-1975, four DARE members detained at Mpima Prison in Zambia, Tongogara, Mudzi, Kangai, and Gumbo, decided that Sithole would have to be removed as the head of ZANU. The four ZANLA commanders began to lobby guerrillas based in Zambia to gain support for their plan to replace Sithole. Their position was further strengthened when Sithole failed to back up the ZANLA guerrillas after a number of them had been fired upon and killed by Zambian troops during an incident in a guerrilla camp on 11 September 1975. The final result of the DARE members' efforts was the "Mgagao Declaration" of late September 1975. Signed by forty-three ZANLA officers at the Mgagao guerrilla camp in Zambia, the main points of the document are summarized below:

1. The ZANLA guerrillas thanked the OAU Liberation Committee, the Tanzanian government, and FRELIMO for their support of the armed struggle.





2. The guerrillas reaffirmed their commitment to an armed struggle as the only means of achieving liberation and denounced all negotiations with the Smith government.

3. Although the guerrillas believed in nationalist unity and affirmed the "Lusaka Declaration of Unity," they asserted that unity could not come at the expense of the armed struggle.

The guerrillas condemned Nkomo for holding his own ANC congress and creating an Nkomo ANC faction. Furthermore, the guerrillas accused Nkomo of collaborating with the Salisbury and Pretoria governments.

5. The guerrillas denounced the ZLC and condemned Sithole and Muzorewa for appointing incompetent politicians rather than guerrilla commanders to head the ZLC.

6. The guerrillas accused Muzorewa, Sithole, and Chikerema of being incompetent leaders and declared them incapable of leading the ANC.

7. The guerrillas condemned Sithole and the Zambian government for their poor treatment of ZANLA detainees in Zambia. Zambia was declared an enemy of the guerrillas.

8. The guerrillas appealed to the OAU and the Tanzanian and Mozambiquen governments for support for the continuation of the guerrilla struggle.  
[Ref. 39]

A critically important aspect of the "Mgagao Declaration" was that it foreclosed any chance Sithole ever had of reasserting his authority over ZANLA (and thus ZANU). It was also the first acknowledgement of Robert Mugabe as the popularly accepted leader of ZANU. At the meeting in September between the four DARE commanders and the detained ZANU executive committee members at Mpima, the executive committee members told the commanders that Mugabe, as the party secretary-general, was the next man in the ZANU political hierarchy and should take over as leader, pending approval by a party congress. In the "Mgagao Declaration," the guerrilla commanders did not go so far as to declare Mugabe the leader of ZANU, but did state that:

An executive member who has been outstanding is Robert Mugabe. He has demonstrated this by defying the rigours of guerrilla life in the jungles of Mozambique. Since we respect him most, in all our dealings with the ANC leadership, he is the only person who can act as a middle man. We



will not accept any direct discussions with any of the leading three members of the ANC we have described above. We can only talk through Robert Mugabe to them. [Ref. 40]

By January 1976, the DARE had officially removed Sithole from the ZANU presidency and had replaced him with Robert Mugabe. Mugabe did not become the president of ZANU at this time because of the legal and procedural ramifications. He continued to maintain his title of secretary-general and picked up the additional title of leader. On 10 September 1976, Sithole denounced the ANC and reclaimed the leadership of ZANU, thus claiming to be the leader of an organization that he himself had disbanded. Sithole's attempt to regain the party leadership failed as Mugabe was already firmly entrenched as ZANU's leader. Sithole's career as a prominent, influential nationalist leader was over.

With the breakdown of the Victoria Falls talks and the change in ZANU's leadership, the stage was set in late 1975 for the formation of the Zimbabwe Peoples' Army (ZIPA) and the resumption of the guerrilla war. Shortly after the "Mgagao Declaration," discussions were begun between ZANU, ZAPU, and the Frontline States that would lead to the formation of ZIPA. There were several reasons for the formation of ZIPA. First, two of the Frontline State leaders, Nyerere and Machel, had concluded as early as July 1975 that the Smith-ANC negotiations were going nowhere. Smith's unyielding stubbornness, the divisions within the ANC, and their generally low opinions of Muzorewa, Nkomo, Sithole, and Chikerema, convinced the two leaders that negotiations were hopeless and that they ought to prepare to revitalize the war effort. The Frontline leaders had decided in Lusaka in July 1975 that, should the Victoria Falls talks fail, the ZANU, ZAPU, and FROLIZI guerrillas should be moved from Zambia and Tanzania to camps in Mozambique in preparation for the resumption of the war. This time around, the



Frontline State leaders wanted the war to be fought by one army, not two.

Second, the ANC-formed ZLC had failed miserably. No major ZANLA or ZIPRA commanders had been appointed commanders in the Zimbabwe Liberation Army (ZLA), which was the military wing of the ZLC. Muzorewa had instead appointed a number of political leaders to leadership positions in the ZLA. In addition, he had appointed a number of junior guerrilla leaders over the heads of their more senior commanders. Sithole had appointed guerrilla leaders who had been suspended from the DARE to positions of authority in the ZLA. In addition, the fact that Muzorewa had expelled Nkomo from the ANC all but ruled out ZAPU/ZIPRA participation in the ZLC/ZLA. Consequently, the ZLC/ZLA had no leaders who had the respect or following of the guerrillas.

Third, the detained ZANU leaders in Zambia felt that if they were going to get assistance from the OAU and the Frontline States for the war effort, they would have to create some sort of military alliance. Consequently, they saw the necessity of forming a joint command with ZAPU. Their professed militancy and belief in the armed struggle would get them nowhere without a unified military effort. Finally, there was a desire among leaders of both ZANU and ZAPU to short-stop competing FROLIZI efforts to gain influence in Rhodesia and valuable support from the OAU and the Frontline States. The best way to do this was to form a joint military command that excluded FROLIZI.

During September and October 1975, Rex Nhongo, the senior ZANU guerrilla commander at liberty, and Jason Moyo, the external ZAPU Secretary-General in Zambia, met to discuss the possibility of bringing ZANLA and ZIPRA under a unified command. Neither ZANLA nor ZIPRA wanted to be dominated by the other. ZANLA had more guerrillas, more





experience, and more current operations in Rhodesia. On the other hand, most of ZANU's political leaders, with the exception of Mugabe and Tekere who were in Mozambique, were in prison in either Rhodesia or Zambia. By contrast, Nkomo in Rhodesia and Moyo in Zambia were still free. The ZANLA guerrillas felt that they would be at an unfair disadvantage if they had to deal with the ZAPU political leaders while their own political leaders were unavailable. Nyerere and Machel supported the ZANLA position. Agreement was finally reached and ZIPA was established on 12 November 1975. The ZIPA military committee had eighteen members, half of which were from ZANLA and half of which were from ZIPRA. Rex Nhongo of ZANLA was the army commander while John Dube of ZIPRA was his deputy. Each functional area on the staff had two officers, with the director coming from one guerrilla organization and his deputy coming from the other.

[Ref. 41]

The ZIPA military command consisted of the most militant members of ZANLA and ZIPRA. The ZANLA commanders were anti-ANC, anti-Sithole, pro-DARE, and pro-Mugabe. The ZIPRA members were anti-ANC and pro-Nkomo. Although ZIPA began to fall apart after the Geneva Conference in December 1976 due to several violent conflicts between the guerrillas, initially the command was fairly successful. ZIPA resumed the guerrilla war against the Rhodesian Front government on 17 January 1976. During the first four months of 1976, the Rhodesian Front government estimated that over 900 guerrillas had entered Rhodesia while thousands more were being trained in Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zambia. The guerrillas adopted hit and run tactics aimed at crippling Rhodesia's economic sector. Roads, railways, farms, and plantations were the primary targets. On 18 April 1976, ZANLA guerrillas blew up the Beit Bridge rail link with South Africa.



During this attack, three white South African tourists were killed, shattering the illusion that Rhodesian security forces were in complete control of the situation.

Originally created as an apolitical military organization whose sole function was to provide military support to the political wings of ZANU and ZAPU, it is ironic that ZIPA's downfall came when it became involved in politics. From ZIPA's very inception, its young ZANLA commanders had pledged their allegiance to Robert Mugabe and the ZANU leaders detained in Zambia. In October 1976, Mugabe began negotiations with Joshua Nkomo for the formation of a ZANU-ZAPU Patriotic Front so that the two organizations could present a united front at the Geneva Conference in December. On 17 October 1976, President Kaunda finally released the detained ZANU leaders, including the charismatic ZANLA guerrilla commander, Josiah Tongogara. Up to this time, the ZANLA commanders had acknowledged Mugabe, Tongogara, and the other detained ZANU leaders as their leaders. They had worked for the release of the leaders and the revitalization of ZANU. Upon the release of the ZANU detainees, the ZANLA commanders in ZIPA reversed their position. They claimed the right to choose among the detainees for their leaders. They refused to accept Tongogara as a guerrilla leader. In addition, they rejected Mugabe's political leadership when he began negotiating for a political settlement. They claimed the right to have more input into the political processes. The ZIPA commanders felt that because they had the military forces, they could force the issue. However, ZIPA had overestimated its ability to influence the situation. The ZIPA commanders had failed to take into account Tongogara's leadership abilities and popularity with the rank and file guerrillas. They had underestimated Mugabe in the same way. In addition, ZIPA was



totally dependent upon Machel's government in Mozambique for support. Machel had spent too much effort getting the Zimbabwean nationalist movement unified to risk it all by supporting the rebellious military commanders. Also, both Nyerere and Machel were death on coups. Consequently, ZIPA's challenge to the authority of Mugabe and Tongogara was a failure. This failure, coupled with the internal fighting among the ZIPA guerrillas in the Mozambique camps, spelled the end of ZIPA as an effective or influential organization by the end of 1976.

Returning to the diplomatic arena in early 1976, the British and United States governments again became involved in seeking a settlement in Rhodesia. On 22 March 1976, three days after the collapse of the Smith-Nkomo talks, British Foreign Secretary James Callaghan delivered a speech which declared Britain's willingness to assist in convening a constitutional conference providing the Smith government agreed to certain preconditions. The preconditions imposed by the British government on the RF government were the principle of majority rule, that elections for majority rule must be held in eighteen months to two years, that independence would only occur after majority rule, that negotiations must not be protracted, and that no attempt should be made to thwart the progress towards majority rule and independence. [Ref. 42]

The British proposals placed the onus to act right in Ian Smith's lap. Smith rejected the British proposals as being as extreme as those of the ANC. The American Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, outlined the following American proposals on 27 April 1976 while in Zambia:

1. American support for the Callaghan proposals of 22 March 1976;

2. A declaration of America's "unrelenting opposition" to the Salisbury regime until a negotiated settlement was reached;





3. A commitment to repeal the Byrd Amendment which allowed American firms to import strategic materials from Rhodesia in violation of the UN sanctions;

4. Support for a rapid negotiated settlement leading to majority rule;

5. A promise to discourage American citizens from travelling to Rhodesia;

6 and 7. A promise to give \$12.5 million in assistance to Mozambique and other states on Rhodesia's borders who suffered as a result of enforcing U.N. sanctions;

8. U.S. assistance for Rhodesian refugees;

9. A promise of economic, technical, and educational assistance once an agreement had been reached;

10. Support for protection of minority rights after independence. [Ref. 43]

Kissinger's speech in Zambia became the basis for intensive negotiations which occurred between May and September 1976. The negotiations involved Kissinger, Smith, the South African Prime Minister, Vorster, Great Britain, the nationalist leaders, and the Frontline State leaders. Kissinger himself met with Vorster twice while other American officials made several trips to Africa to meet with other African leaders. On 24 September 1976, Kissinger returned to Africa with the hope of finalizing an agreement. The result was a settlement package which became known as the "Kissinger Proposals" and which included the following six points:

1. Majority rule in two years;

2. An immediate conference with African leaders to organize an interim government;

3. The interim government was to consist of a council of state, half of whose members would be black and half white, with a white chairman without a special vote. This council would be responsible for drafting a new constitution. There would also be a council of ministers with executive authority during the interim period. The two Ministries of Defense and Law and Order on this council were to be held by whites;

4. Great Britain would enact enabling legislation once an agreement had been reached;

5. Once the interim government was established a ceasefire would begin;



6. The international community would provide "substantial economic support" to assure Rhodesia's economic future. [Ref. 44]

While Smith accepted the Kissinger Proposals in their entirety, as a "packaged deal," it should be noted that the nationalist leaders and the Frontline State presidents did not totally accept the proposals but only viewed them as a basis for further discussion. Consequently, the Geneva Conference, which convened on 28 October 1976, was doomed from the very beginning because the nationalists believed the Kissinger Proposals were negotiable while Smith demanded that they accept all or nothing.

In early October 1976, Robert Mugabe and Jason Moyo began negotiations in Mozambique to form an alliance between ZANU and ZAPU at the Geneva Conference. Immediately before the conference, Mugabe and Nkomo finalized an agreement which formed the Patriotic Front (PF). Thus, Mugabe and Nkomo attended the conference as a joint delegation. The conference was also attended by Bishop Muzorewa, the leader of the UANC-ZLC, the Rhodesian government, and the British government. The Frontline States and the United States sent observers to the conference. The Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole, claiming to be the legitimate leader of ZANU, also attended the conference. Mugabe did not object to Sithole's attending the conference as long as he did not claim to represent ZANU. Mugabe and the PF successfully blocked Sithole's attempts to be recognized as ZANU's leader. When Sithole offered to form a patriotic alliance with Muzorewa's UANC, the bishop, who already had a large following, turned him down. It should be noted that on 14 September 1976 Muzorewa had changed the name of his organization to the UANC in order to differentiate it from the Sithole organization which also often used the name ANC in order to gain popular support.



While the Smith government viewed the primary purpose of the Geneva Conference as being the implementation of the Kissinger Proposals, the nationalists had other proposals they wanted implemented. The UANC demands, which were also supported by the other Zimbabwean participants, were as follows:

1. The immediate release, without conditions, of all political prisoners--detainees and restrictees including people in the concentration villages.
2. The revocation of all death sentences on political prisoners and prisoners of war and their immediate release.
3. The granting of general amnesty to all those considered to have committed political crime, including those outside the country.
4. The creation of conditions conducive to free political activities and freedom of expression in the country.
5. The halting of all political trials.
6. The lifting of the state of emergency together with all restrictive regulations at present in force.
7. In short, we demand the immediate suspension of the present 'racist' and 'oppressive' constitution.  
[Ref. 45]

The Rhodesian delegates ignored the nationalist demands, whereupon the nationalist organizations informed the Rhodesian and British representatives that they would continue the guerrilla war if the conference did not come up with an acceptable solution leading to majority rule. On 29 October 1976, Robert Mugabe issued the following statement which represented the position of the Patriotic Front:

In conclusion, let me say, Mr. Chairman, that our presence at this conference is indicative of our preparedness to pursue the method of peaceful negotiations. It is indicative of the fact that though we have had to resort to armed struggle we have done so because peaceful negotiations had continuously proved a failure. If this conference will therefore fail to produce a settlement of the nature we desire, we shall have no option but to continue to resort to war in order to achieve our freedom and independence. We have always loved peace, but when peace was lost we resorted to war in order to achieve the lost peace. Let us achieve peace in Geneva for failure to do so will necessarily mean the continuation of war in pursuit of peace. [Ref. 46]





As the Geneva Conference continued, so did the problems. The African nationalists could not reach agreement among themselves over most of the major issues, including the structure, composition, and duration of the transitional government before independence. The Smith government felt that there was no need for the conference if the nationalists were not going to accept the Kissinger package. On 5 November 1976, Smith threatened to negotiate a separate internal settlement with one of the other nationalist parties in order to implement the Kissinger package if the Geneva Conference broke down. The main issue that signalled the death knell of the Geneva Conference was the question of who would control the security and defense forces during the interim government. The white regime insisted that the ultimate authority over the security and defense forces should lie with it during the transitional period before majority rule. This was unacceptable to the African nationalists. The Smith regime argued that unless it maintained control over the ministries of defense and police, discipline in the security forces would collapse and anarchy would result during the transitional period. The nationalist leaders, on the other hand, believed that to leave the police and defense ministries in white hands would give the Smith government too much influence during the transitional period. When the British government offered to appoint a British governor-general in Salisbury to control the security forces, Smith rejected the offer. All negotiations deadlocked, the Geneva Conference was adjourned on 14 December 1976 with the hope that it would be reconvened on 17 January 1977.

The stalemate between the nationalists and the Rhodesian Front government continued and the Geneva Convention was not reconvened in January. On 21 January 1977, the British



ambassador to the UN and chairman of the Geneva Conference, Ivor Richards, offered Ian Smith a new set of proposals which he hoped would break the deadlock. The main provisions of Richards' proposals were as follows:

1. A transitional government to be headed by a British interim commissioner.
2. Government to be led by a council of ministers comprising equal representation by each of the delegations represented at Geneva plus representatives of the European community appointed by the commissioner. (Such a council would have a substantial African majority.)
3. The commissioner to be guided by an advisory council consisting of the heads of the delegations at Geneva.
4. The heads of the Geneva delegations along with the heads of the army and the police force to serve on a national security council headed by the commissioner.
5. Foreign affairs, defence, and internal security to come under the commissioner. [Ref. 47]

The Richards Plan scrapped the provisions of the Kissinger Proposal that would have guaranteed the white chairmanship of the council of state and Rhodesian Front control of the Ministries of Defence and Law and Order. On 24 January 1977, Smith rejected the new British proposals and insisted that he would not accept anything other than the Kissinger Proposals. Smith announced that he was beginning negotiations with Bishop Muzorewa to obtain a separate, internal settlement.

Smith had a number of reasons to believe that he would be able to reach an agreement with Muzorewa. Throughout the Geneva Conference, Smith felt that Muzorewa had demonstrated a more moderate position than had Mugabe and Nkomo on the issues of majority rule and control of the security forces during the interim government. The Rhodesian Front government believed that, even though he had no control over the nationalist guerrilla armies, Muzorewa did command the loyalty of more Africans inside of Rhodesia than did the



Patriotic Front. Consequently, it would be to Muzorewa's advantage to negotiate a settlement with Smith rather than to risk losing his position as the dominant nationalist leader in Rhodesia to either Mugabe or Nkomo. Smith's strategy was given a big assist on 9 January 1977 when, after a two-day meeting in Lusaka, the presidents of the Frontline States (Zambia, Tanzania, Mozambique, Botswana, and Angola) announced that they were going to throw all of their support behind the Patriotic Front which they considered to be the sole, legitimate, representative Zimbabwean nationalist organization. In a statement read by President Nyerere, the five leaders said that they had decided to give their "full political, material, and diplomatic support to the Patriotic Front to enable them to achieve the objectives of their just struggle" [Ref. 48]. The decision of the Frontline State leaders was backed-up by the Liberation Committee of the OAU in Lusaka on 8 February 1977 when it gave the Patriotic Front a mandate to escalate the guerrilla war against Rhodesia's white minority government. Thus, Muzorewa found himself isolated from the mainstream support for the nationalist cause and was faced with the choice of either negotiating with Smith or being left out in the cold.

The escalation of the guerrilla war by ZANLA and ZIPRA was also bringing domestic and economic pressures to bear upon Smith. The increased guerrilla activity in late 1976 and early 1977 had convinced many white Rhodesians that their privileged position in society was not worth dying for and that the days of the white majority regime were numbered. Consequently, white emigration increased dramatically. The emigration meant a drain of skilled labor and currency out of the country. By January 1977, guerrillas were active in virtually all of Rhodesia and of Rhodesia's 1,842 - mile border, only the South Africa portion could be





considered secure. With the security forces stretched to their maximum capabilities, the Rhodesian Front announced on 27 January 1977 that it would call up all able-bodied men between the ages of thirty-seven and fifty for military service and tighten up on draft exemptions. The opposition from the business community to the cancellation of all deferments for men under thirty-eight years of age caused the Minister of Defense, Mr. Cowper, to resign in disgust on 13 February 1977. Twenty-three percent of the 1976-77 national budget, or \$186 million, was being devoted to national defense. This was about four times the outlay of fiscal year 1972-73. The situation was made more difficult in June 1977 when the United States reimposed UN economic sanctions on Rhodesia. By June 1977, the escalating guerrilla war was costing the Smith government \$800,000 a day. That same month, the RF government announced that all white males under thirty-eight years of age would be required to serve 190 days per year in the security forces while those thirty-eight to fifty would serve a minimum of seventy days. The wider call-up accelerated white emigration which in turn had the dual effects of lowering the gross domestic product and decreasing the number of whites available for military service. By October 1977, the war was costing twenty-seven percent of the national budget, or over one million dollars per day. The pressure was on Smith to reach an agreement with black leaders of his own choosing and to bring about a ceasefire. [Ref. 49]

From January through August 1977, Smith moved towards an internal settlement with Bishop Muzorewa. On 1 September 1977, British Foreign Secretary David Owen and the United States Ambassador to the UN, Andrew Young, presented Smith with the Anglo-American Peace Proposals on Zimbabwe. On 13 September 1977, Smith temporarily shelved his plans for an



internal settlement in order that the Anglo-American Proposals might be further discussed. The basic provisions of the proposals were as follows:

1. Surrender of power by the present regime and a return to legality.
2. An orderly and peaceful transition to independence in the course of 1978.
3. Peaceful and impartial elections on the basis of universal adult suffrage.
4. The establishment, by the British government, of a transitional administration with the task of conducting elections for an independent government (Field Marshal Lord Carver would represent Britain as resident commissioner during the transition period).
5. A United Nations presence, including a UN force, during the transition period.
6. An independent constitution providing for a democratically elected government, the abolition of discrimination, the protection of individual rights, and the independence of the judiciary.
7. A development fund to revive the economy of the country which Britain and the U.S. view as predicated upon the implementation of the settlement as a whole. [Ref. 50]

The new Anglo-American Proposals were really no different from earlier British proposals. They envisaged the Rhodesian Front government giving up its power immediately, to include security forces, and nearly immediate majority rule. Obviously, Smith could not be expected to accept such terms. On 23 October 1977, Smith rejected the Anglo-American Proposals and pushed ahead with his internal settlement plans.

Since January, Smith had taken several actions to pave the way for his internal settlement. In February, he had announced plans to end racial discrimination within the country. In April he had expelled twelve extreme right-wing radicals from the Rhodesian Front Party. On 18 July he dissolved parliament and called for new elections in which he would seek white support for an internal settlement. The icing on the cake came when Smith announced on 24 November



that he accepted the principle of majority rule and would begin official talks with Muzorewa, Sithole, and two traditional leaders, Chief Chirau and Chief Ndiweni, on 9 December.

The Frontline State leaders, seeing that Smith was stealing the initiative from the Patriotic Front, had attempted to get negotiations going in December 1977 and January 1978 that would involve all parties. On 18 December 1977, the Frontline State leaders reaffirmed their support for the Anglo-American Proposals. Samora Machel began to pressure the PF to reopen negotiations with Smith and on 13 January 1978 he even admitted that PF demands for control of the security forces during the transition period were unreasonable [Ref. 51]. Plans were made for the PF leaders to meet with Anglo-American representatives at Malta in late January 1978. Although the Malta talks were held, they had no effect on the Smith-Muzorewa-Sithole negotiations in Salisbury which were near completion by that time. After nearly three months of negotiations, Smith and the four internal leaders finally reached an agreement for an internal settlement on 3 March 1978. Signed by Smith, Muzorewa, Sithole, and Chirau, this settlement was obtained without consulting PF-ZANU-ZAPU. The settlement, which provided for a transitional government, had the following provisions:

1. A new constitution would be drafted providing majority rule based on adult suffrage;
2. A legislative assembly of one-hundred members with seventy-two seats reserved for black and twenty-eight seats reserved for whites (enough to provide whites a veto over constitutional changes);
3. The reserved seats for whites would be retained for at least ten years and would be reviewed at the end of that period, at which time a commission headed by the judge of the high court would be appointed to undertake the review. If the commission were to recommend that the reserved seats for whites should be changed, an amendment to the constitution to effect such change by a bill which would require the affirmative votes of not less than fifty-one members of the legislative assembly;





4. The independence and the qualifications of the judiciary would be entrenched and the judges would have security of tenure;

5. The civil service, the police, and the defense forces would be free from political interference;

6. The above provisions would be set out in the new constitution and would be regarded as specifically entrenched provisions which could not be amended except by a bill that required the affirmative votes of at least seventy-eight members of the legislative assembly. [Ref. 52]

Thus, the agreement insured that whites, which made up only four percent of the population, would control twenty-eight percent of the legislature. In addition, it provided for the continued white domination of the judiciary and security forces. Smith had secured an agreement that, in effect, would insure the privileged position of the white minority for at least another ten years.

#### B. THE INTERIM AGREEMENT AND THE FINAL AGREEMENT: 1978 - 1980

The action in Phase V, which lasted from the signing of the interim agreement on 3 March 1978 until the ZANU-PF election victory on 4 March 1980, was dominated by several different themes. The first concerns the efforts of the Smith-Muzorewa government to consolidate its position and eliminate the Patriotic Front opposition in order to confront the external nationalist leaders and guerrillas and the international community with a de facto "solution" to the Rhodesian problem. The second theme deals with the refusal of Great Britain, the United States, the United Nations, and most of the rest of the international community to recognize the Smith-Muzorewa agreement and efforts to diplomatically pressure the Smith-Muzorewa bloc to agree to a settlement involving all concerned parties and providing uninterrupted movement towards majority rule. The third



theme is concerned primarily with the intensification of the guerrilla war by ZANLA and ZIPRA in order to force meaningful change and the failure of the Smith-Muzorewa coalition to bring an end to the guerrilla war.

Almost immediately after the internal agreement was signed, the Smith-Muzorewa led multi-racial Salisbury group embarked upon policies designed to solidify their own position as Rhodesia's leaders and to exclude the Patriotic Front from the constitutional negotiations. On 12 March 1978, the signatories of the internal settlement announced that they were not interested in an all-parties constitutional conference and that they intended to exclude the ZANU-ZAPU-PF from the constitutional conference. Smith wanted to deal only with what he considered to be "moderate" black leaders and Muzorewa and Sithole were more than willing to go along with him on this to preserve their new-found prestige. During that same week, Muzorewa travelled to the UN to seek support for the internal settlement. But on 10 March 1978, a coalition of African, socialist, and third world countries in the Security Council prevented Sithole from addressing the General Assembly and on 14 March the Security Council voted to condemn all attempts by the illegal regime in Rhodesia to retain power or to prevent the achievement of independence. It also declared the internal agreement illegal and unacceptable.

Evidently, Smith believed that Muzorewa and Sithole had greater influence with the guerrillas than they really did. What he failed to realize was that the vast majority of the guerrillas were controlled by Mugabe and Nkomo. On 2 May 1978, the Rhodesian government announced that a general amnesty would be granted to all guerrillas who laid down their arms and turned themselves in. Smith believed that Muzorewa and Sithole could "swing enough weight with the



nationalist guerrillas to bring about a ceasefire." [Ref. 53] On 16 May 1978 he announced that it would be possible to defuse the situation in eastern Rhodesia where Muzorewa and Sithole supposedly had a following among the guerrillas [Ref. 54].

All of Smith's attempts to achieve a ceasefire failed miserably. Throughout June 1978, the Patriotic Front accelerated the guerrilla effort within Rhodesia. Not only were attacks on white settlers and the security forces increasing, but even some of Muzorewa's and Sithole's own followers were killed by the guerrillas. The guerrillas had been buoyed not only by the obvious weakness of the coalition regime, but also by the prospect of external assistance. The UN Security Council had already condemned the internal settlement. The United States and Great Britain were pressuring the regime for an all-party settlement and constitution. Mozambique was giving increasing aid to the ZANU guerrillas. On 24 April 1978, the USSR and Cuba announced that they intended to increase aid to the guerrilla forces. By 15 June 1978, Smith was forced to admit for the first time that military efforts to stop the guerrillas were not succeeding.

In July 1978, the Salisbury regime launched a number of air strikes against guerrilla bases in Mozambique. This action was defended by none other than Sithole on the grounds that the government was attempting to move towards democracy. [Ref. 55]

On the home front, the increasing guerrilla pressure had forced the government to enact policies designed to obtain support for the internal settlement from among the African masses. On 8 August 1978, the new regime announced that it had ordered the end to discrimination in public places, although separate educational and health systems and





segregated neighborhoods would still be maintained. On 16 September 1978, the interim government, with Sithole as its spokesman, announced that, for the first time, blacks would be drafted into the army. Sithole explained that since blacks would benefit from majority rule, they were obligated to fight to defend the internal settlement. Muzorewa vehemently opposed this policy on the grounds that unless there was majority rule there should be no military call-up. [Ref. 56]

Probably realizing that Muzorewa and Sithole had little control over the nationalist guerrillas, Smith allowed President Kaunda of Zambia to arrange a meeting between him and Joshua Nkomo. Smith probably viewed Nkomo as the oldest and most respected of the nationalist leaders and hoped that he carried greater influence with the guerrillas. Additionally, this was another opportunity for Smith to weaken the Patriotic Front by playing upon the divisions between ZANU and ZAPU. Smith still believed that Nkomo, inspite of the fact that he was receiving Soviet assistance, was more moderate than Mugabe. Smith hoped that Nkomo, as was the case in 1975 when he broke away from Muzorewa's ANC, could be convinced to desert the Patriotic Front and negotiate a separate agreement with the Salisbury regime. Smith and Nkomo met secretly in Zambia on 14 August 1978. All prospects for a Smith-Nkomo deal were shattered on 4 September 1978 when guerrillas shot down an Air-Rhodesia airliner and killed all forty-eight passengers. When Nkomo announced that ZAPU guerrillas were responsible for this action, the public outcry from white Rhodesians prevented Smith from even considering a settlement with Nkomo. An important aspect of the Smith-Nkomo liaison is that it again placed Nkomo's credibility in the nationalist movement in a questionable light. Was Nkomo a dedicated nationalist



searching for a workable solution or a political opportunist trying to enhance his own position? This question would come back to haunt Nkomo in the 1980 elections.

On 14 September 1978, the Salisbury government, citing the escalation of the guerrilla war by ZANLA and ZIPRA, banned the ZANU-ZAPU-PF from Rhodesia and thus prevented them from participating in the scheduled elections. On 29 October 1978, Smith, apparently without consulting either Muzorewa or Sithole, postponed the elections from 31 December 1978 to April 1979, supposedly because of administrative problems in setting up the elections. The real reason for the election postponement was the unstable security situation in Rhodesia. Despite the airstrikes, increasingly large numbers of guerrillas were infiltrating into Rhodesia from Zambia and Mozambique. On 31 October 1978, large sectors of southern and western Rhodesia were placed under martial law. Guerrillas had begun to attack previously immune targets in urban areas. On 11 December 1978, a large oil storage depot in Salisbury was blown up. Military manpower was being strained because of the fact that increasingly large numbers of whites were leaving the country. [Ref. 57] On 12 January 1979, the Rhodesian government announced that white males between the ages of fifty and fifty-nine would be called up for emergency military service.

Throughout this period since the March 1978 settlement, the Rhodesian government was also being pressured by the international community through diplomatic channels. In mid-April 1978, David Owen, Cyrus Vance, Andrew Young, the Frontline State leaders and the Patriotic Front leaders met in Dar-es-Salaam to discuss the Rhodesian problem. All of the participants agreed on the necessity of having an all-party constitutional conference, but no one was willing to set a timetable for the conference.



On 26 July 1978, the U.S. Senate adopted the Case-Javits Amendment to the International Security Assistance Act of 1978. The Amendment provided for the removal of U.S. sanctions against Rhodesia after 31 December 1978

provided that the President determines that (1) the Government of Rhodesia has demonstrated its willingness to negotiate in good faith at an all-parties conference held under international auspices, on all issues; and (2) a government has been installed, chosen by free elections in which all political and population groups have been allowed to participate freely, with observation by impartial, internationally recognized observers [Ref. 58].

On 15 August 1978, the House of Representatives also agreed to accept the amendment. Throughout October 1978, Rhodesian government and business representatives lobbied in the United States for acceptance of the internal settlement and the lifting of the sanctions. They were able to rally some support from conservative members of Congress.

On 21 December 1978, the UN General Assembly voted to condemn and reject the internal settlement of 3 March 1978. The UN denounced all maneuvers of the Rhodesian regime aimed at retaining power for the white minority, declared the internal settlement null and void, and declared illegal any internal settlement under the auspices of the illegal regime, and called upon all states not to recognize any such settlement. [Ref. 59]

On 2 January 1979, the Rhodesian government unveiled its new "Majority Rule Constitution." On 30 January 1979, an all-white referendum of Rhodesian whites approved the new constitution. The main provisions of the "Majority Rule Constitution" were as follows:

1. The country was to be renamed Zimbabwe-Rhodesia.
2. Parliament was to consist of two houses--the House of the Assembly and the Senate.
3. The Senate would consist of thirty members, ten of whom would be elected by the seventy-two black members of the House of Assembly: ten would be whites elected by the twenty-eight white members of the House of Assembly and ten would be African chiefs elected by the Council of Chiefs.





4. There would be two voting rolls, a common voters roll on which both black and whites could vote and a separate white voters roll. (Thus whites could vote twice.)

5. The creation of four commissions--Judicial Service, Public Service, Police Service, and Defense Forces Service. The qualification for membership in the commissions were so high that they virtually ruled out black members.

On 8 March 1979, the United Nations Security Council voted to condemn the new constitution and the scheduled April elections.

The elections under the new constitution were held from 17 April to 20 April 1979. When the results were revealed on 24 April 1979, Muzorewa's party had won a landslide victory, having taken fifty-one of the seventy-two black parliamentary seats, or sixty-seven percent of the vote. Sithole's party had won only twelve seats. Smith's Rhodesian Front Party had taken all twenty-eight white seats.

The credibility of the elections was questioned immediately after the results were announced. Sithole charged that the elections had been rigged and demanded a commission of inquiry. On 9 May 1979, Sithole boycotted the first session of parliament and on 28 May his party refused to fill its two cabinet seats. The value of the election was also questionable because all of the parties had agreed, prior to the elections, that cabinet posts would be distributed on the basis of the number of parliamentary seats each party won. Thus, whites would be assured of retaining at least one-quarter of the cabinet seats and thereby be in a position to restrain a black prime minister.

The announcement of the election results brought the expected reaction from the PF leaders. Mugabe and Nkomo met for three days in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. At the end of the meeting, they announced that a joint military command would



be formed to coordinate the actions of ZANLA and ZIPRA. The guerrilla war was again escalated.

The elections also received generally negative reactions from the international community. One positive reaction came from the U.S. Congress when on 15 May 1979 it called for President Carter to lift the sanctions against Rhodesia. On 29 May 1979, the OAU refused to recognize Muzorewa's regime and warned Britain and the United States not to recognize the regime either. In a statement issued through Kenya's foreign ministry, the OAU expressed concern at movements in London and Washington to remove the sanctions. That same day, President Nyerere stated that if the United States and Britain recognized the Muzorewa government and lifted the sanctions it would be the same as declaring war on ZANLA and ZIPRA, and Zambia and Mozambique who were assisting them. Nyerere said that such action by the United States or Great Britain could only lengthen the war and insure the complete destruction of any whites left in Rhodesia. Finally, on 30 May 1979, the Nigerian government sent signals to London and Washington implying that they would be subject to an oil embargo should they decide to recognize the Muzorewa government or lift the sanctions. [Ref. 60]

On 8 June 1979, President Carter announced that the United States would continue to act in compliance with UN economic sanctions against Rhodesia. Carter denounced the elections as neither fair nor free because:

1. The elections were held under a constitution that was drafted by and submitted only to the white minority and that the black citizens who constituted ninety-six percent of the population of Zimbabwe never had a chance to consider nor to vote for or against the constitution under which elections were held.

2. The constitution gave the white minority vastly disproportionate numbers of votes in parliament, continued control over the army, police, judiciary, and civil service and a veto over any significant constitutional reform.



3. The representatives of the opposing parties (ZANU and ZAPU) were banned from the elections. [Ref. 61]

The Muzorewa government had hoped to get some support from the newly elected British Conservative government at the Commonwealth Conference which convened in Lusaka, Zambia on 1 August 1979. However, on 3 August 1979, Prime Minister Thatcher told the heads of state that Great Britain was for working for a comprehensive settlement involving all parties. The conference participants then proceeded to draft a settlement plan that was unanimously approved on 6 August 1979 by all thirty-nine heads of delegation present. The plan called for Great Britain to convene an all-party constitutional conference in order to adopt a democratic constitution including safeguards for minorities and to bring about a ceasefire and an end to the sanctions. [Ref. 62]

Initially, the Commonwealth proposals for a constitutional conference met with negative responses from the involved parties. Both Smith and Muzorewa denounced the conference. Yet they were unable to offer an alternative solution as they could neither end the guerrilla war nor achieve international recognition for the Salisbury government. Nkomo rejected the British supervised elections as he blamed the British for causing the problem in the first place. An equally uncompromising position was presented by ZANU on 7 August 1979 when it declared that:

1. The Smith-Muzorewa illegal regime and its iniquitous constitution must be liquidated.

2. The constitution must contain no racist or otherwise abridgement on the part of the people acting either directly or through their representatives in parliament to freely alter it or abolish it.

3. Before reaching any agreement the racist Rhodesian army and police forces must be disarmed, barracked, and demobilized to give way to our forces. [Ref. 63]





Yet both Mugabe and Nkomo were being pressured by their supporters in Mozambique and Zambia to negotiate a peace settlement, even if compromise was necessary. Thus, by 20 August 1979, all sides had accepted invitations to attend the London Constitutional Conference on 10 September 1979.

The Lancaster House talks were organized around an agenda that called for, in order, (1) discussion of the independence constitution and (2) "pre-independence agreements divided into three sectors: (a) elections under the new constitution, (b) the ceasefire and military agreements and (c) administrative arrangements and maintenance of law and order during the transition." [Ref. 64] The constitution proposed by the British was based upon the independence constitutions of former British colonies and the current Rhodesian constitution.

Meeting frequent stalemates throughout the conference, Lord Carrington conducted the negotiations by dealing bi-laterally, first with one side and then with the other. On 21 September 1979, the Salisbury delegation voted to accept the British constitutional proposals. After the Patriotic Front was presented with the British proposals, it tabled its own proposals which differed from the British constitutional proposals in the following respects:

1. There was no special representation for whites.
2. Provision for an executive president with wide ranging powers--including powers to appoint members of public service, defense, and police commissions.
3. Lack of protection of private property rights.
4. No guarantees for the pension rights of civil servants.
5. Stringent citizenship requirements. [Ref. 65]

Since the Salisbury government had already accepted the British proposals, the Patriotic Front was under pressure to accept them also. Fearing that their intransigence would deal them out of the talks, the guerrillas reluctantly



accepted the principle of reserved seats for whites. On 1 October 1979, Carrington gave the PF delegates a more detailed version of the British proposals and five days to make up their minds. A partial compromise was reached on 10 October 1979 and, after Carrington threatened to implement the constitution with or without the PF, the PF finally accepted the British proposals on 18 October 1979. The remainder of the conference, dealing with the ceasefire and transition period, followed a similar pattern. The frequent stalemates would be broken by British pressure in the form of Carrington's intimidations and bullying. The Lancaster House Agreement was finally signed on 17 December 1979.

During the two month transition period prior to the elections, Robert Mugabe and ZANU decided to run separately in the elections rather than with Nkomo and PF-ZAPU. Thus, there would be three nationalist blocs competing for power on election day -- Muzorewa (UANC), Nkomo (PF-ZAPU), and Mugabe (ZANU-PF). Each party leader believed that he was destined to be the first prime minister of the new country of Zimbabwe. When the results were finally tallied on 4 March 1980, Mugabe had emerged as the victor. ZANU-PF had won seventy-one percent of the African seats and fifty-seven percent of all the seats in parliament and seventy-seven percent of all Patriotic Front seats. Joshua Nkomo and PF-ZAPU had won twenty seats, while Muzorewa and the UANC, the overwhelming winners just a year earlier, had only won three seats. The reasons for Mugabe's landslide victory will be the topic of the next section.



## V. THE NATIONALIST CANDIDATES IN 1980

This section of this study has two purposes. First, it will examine the personal and political backgrounds, leadership qualities, and bases of support of the three principal candidates in the 1980 elections, Joshua Nkomo, Bishop Abel Muzorewa, and Robert Mugabe. Second, by comparing and contrasting the three candidates, it will show why Robert Mugabe won the 1980 elections. Throughout this chapter, the basic position taken will be that the determining factor in the outcome of the election was the personal credibility of the candidates. By the time election day rolled around, only Mugabe had any kind of meaningful credibility with the majority of the electorate.

### A. JOSHUA NKOMO

#### 1. Biographical Background

A member of the Kalanga tribe of the Ndebele nation, Joshua Mqabuko Nyongolo Nkomo was born in June 1917 on the Semokwe Reserve, Matabeleland, Southern Rhodesia. Both of his parents worked for the London Missionary Society, his father first as a driver and later as a teacher and his mother as a cook. Young Nkomo received his primary education at the Tjolotjo School after which he worked variously as a driver, bakery delivery boy, and carpenter. By 1941 Nkomo had saved enough money to enroll for one year at Adams College in Durban, South Africa. A clerk at the school, a Mrs. Hoskins, took an interest in Nkomo and encouraged him to continue his studies and enabled him to do so by employing him after school and paying his fees. In 1944,





with the financial assistance of Mrs. Hoskins, Nkomo enrolled in a three-year course of study at the Jan Hofmeyr School of Social Sciences in Johannesburg. While in South Africa, Nkomo came under the influence of Drs. Zuma and Lembede, two leaders of the South African African National Congress (SAANC). Although he showed little interest in politics at the time, these initial political associations would influence Nkomo's future.

In 1947, Joshua Nkomo returned to Rhodesia where he was employed by the Rhodesian Railway as a social worker, the first black to hold such a position. During the next two years, Nkomo completed his studies at the University of South Africa and graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in Economics and Sociology.

## 2. Early Political Career

If God ever equipped a human being for the world of politics, Joshua Nkomo is that man. A large, heavy-set man (well over six feet tall and 250 pounds), Nkomo has the impressive physical appearance that is always a great asset to a politician. A dynamic, exciting speaker, he has the ability to arouse any audience. Always smiling, always joking, and always outgoing, Nkomo has the same gregarious, handshaking, baby-kissing style that many American politicians have. Nkomo loves his role as a celebrity. Thus, it was totally in character for this charismatic, father-like figure to throw his hat into the political arena.

Nkomo's initiation to the world of politics occurred in 1951 when he was appointed secretary of the Railway Workers' Association, which later became the Rhodesian African Workers Union (RAWU). Under Nkomo's leadership, the union was reorganized and its membership increased. In 1952, Nkomo was elected president of the African National



Congress. Nkomo attempted to unite all the African organizations, including those in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, in the All-Africa Peoples' Convention. This attempt was unsuccessful and the convention was abandoned in 1954. In 1952, Nkomo joined the United Federal Party (UFP) and accepted an invitation from Sir Godfrey Huggins, the Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, to represent African opinion at the London Conference on the proposed federation of the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland in the Central African Federation. At the conference Nkomo opposed the creation of the Federation, but the British government went ahead with its plans to create it. In January 1954, Nkomo ran in the first Federal Election as an independent candidate for the African seat of Matabeleland, but was heavily defeated by Mike Hove, the UFP candidate. That same year, Nkomo resigned from the railroad and became an auctioneer and insurance agent. During this period, he remained active in the leadership of the Southern Rhodesia African National Congress (SRANC) and in September 1957 he was elected its president. The Youth League, which was founded in 1957, merged with the SRANC in 1959 to form the ANC. As president of the ANC, Nkomo was very active in campaigning against the Land Husbandry Act. In addition, he was successful in his efforts to get the Court of Appeals to set aside the convictions of a number of black defendants. Consequently, by 1959, Nkomo was somewhat of a popular hero to black Rhodesians. This, coupled with the fact that he was the first widely known and well-publicized black politician and nationalist, placed Nkomo in a position where he was viewed as "the father of Zimbabwean nationalism."



### 3. Dedicated Nationalist or Political Opportunist?

The major factor in Nkomo's defeat in the February 1980 Zimbabwean elections was his lack of credibility as a nationalist. From the late 1950's onward, questions would be continually raised about Nkomo's integrity, courage, and dedication to the nationalist cause. Was he truly the father of Zimbabwean nationalism or simply an opportunistic politician? Why did he always have to be the leader or president of every organization he ever belonged to? Why was he inevitably out of the country during government crackdowns on his organizations? Did he attempt to negotiate separate, internal settlements with the British and Rhodesian governments in order to get the best deal possible for black Rhodesians or to insure the security of his own position in Rhodesian politics? During the latter stages of the guerrilla struggle, why did he keep his large, well-trained, and well-equipped army sequestered in Zambia while allowing ZANLA to carry the burden of the fighting? Was his failure to commit his forces simply due to his conservatism and caution, or was it because he was planning to use his army to eliminate his competition in a post-independence Zimbabwean civil war? Questions like these continually shadowed Nkomo's political ambitions.

Doubt was often cast upon Nkomo's personal courage and dedication because of his propensity for avoiding arrest by being abroad during turbulent times in Southern Rhodesia. In December 1958, Nkomo travelled to Accra to attend the first All-Africa Peoples' Conference and from there to Cairo. While Nkomo was in Egypt, a state of emergency was declared in Rhodesia on 26 February 1959. The ANC was banned and over 500 of its members were arrested and detained. Among those arrested were the entire leadership of the ANC, minus, of course, Joshua Nkomo. On the advice





of friends in Egypt, he claims, Nkomo did not return home to face arrest [Ref. 66]. He instead began a twenty-month self-imposed exile during which time he set up an external ANC office in London and sought support for the objectives of the ANC throughout the world. While Nkomo was abroad, the National Democratic Party (NDP) was formed on 1 January 1960. The NDP was simply a new name for the banned ANC as it had the same leadership, structure, and goals as its predecessor. Michael Mawema was elected the president of the new party with the understanding that his appointment was temporary pending the return to Salisbury of Joshua Nkomo. Nevertheless, many members of the NDP believed Nkomo to be a coward for not returning to Rhodesia. These critics of Nkomo, as mentioned earlier, broke away from the NDP to form the Zimbabwe National Party (ZNP) which later became the Pan-African Socialist Party (PASU).

In October 1960, Nkomo finally returned to Rhodesia to lead the NDP. At the NDP inaugural conference elections on 28 November 1960, Nkomo defeated Leopold Takawira, Moton Malianga, Ndabaningi Sithole, and Mawema for the presidency of the NDP.

The NDP was banned on 9 December 1961. Ironically, Nkomo was again out of the country (this time in Tanganyika) and thus escaped arrest. The NDP's successor, ZAPU, was established on 17 December 1961. Only nine months later, on 20 September 1962, ZAPU was also banned by the Rhodesian government. Coincidentally or not, Nkomo was again abroad, this time in Lusaka, Northern Rhodesia. While in Northern Rhodesia, Nkomo came to the conclusion that nothing useful could be achieved by party action within Rhodesia. He therefore decided to set up a ZAPU government-in-exile that would exert pressure on the UN, the OAU, and other sympathetic bodies in order to bring about change in



Southern Rhodesia. This plan did not please the other ZAPU leaders. At the time of the ZAPU crackdown, all of the ZAPU leaders inside Southern Rhodesia, including Robert Mugabe, Leopold Takawira, and J.Z. Moyo, had been arrested and taken to the tribal reserves for three months detention. The ZAPU leaders had expected that Nkomo would return to Rhodesia to provide leadership to his followers. They were shocked to find out that he instead intended to go to Dar-es-Salaam to set up his government-in-exile. Nkomo did this against the advice of nationalist leaders in Northern Rhodesia. Nathan Shamuyarira quotes Sikota Wina, the publicity secretary of the Northern Rhodesia UNIP as saying that Joshua Nkomo had been

strongly advised that his political leadership and the solution to the Southern Rhodesia crisis almost entirely depends on his presence in the country and among his people, whatever the circumstances. Remaining away in Northern Rhodesia, or in any other country, will have the effect of seriously weakening morale among the ranks of the toiling masses of Southern Rhodesia.

Shamuyarira continues to note that "recalling the names of six leaders in Africa to prove that 'liberation and independence are always preceded by sacrifice, and even imprisonment of the leader,'" Sikota added:

Mr. Nkomo has no alternative but to be one of them if the Southern Rhodesia freedom struggle is to start seriously and his leadership prestige is maintained. [Ref. 67]

Using a disguise and a double, Nkomo travelled from Lusaka to Dar-es-Salaam, where he met with President Julius Nyerere and Ndabaningi Sithole. The leaders pressured Nkomo to return to Southern Rhodesia to suffer the same restraints as his ZAPU comrades. Nkomo was finally persuaded and flew back to Rhodesia where he spent three months restriction at Kezi south of Bulawayo.

Although Nkomo would eventually (beginning on 16 April 1964) spend more than ten years under restriction, his



initial success at avoiding arrest and restriction reflected unfavorably upon him and would have a lasting effect on his career. Whether Nkomo's motivation in this period was that he feared detention and enjoyed the good life of a celebrity abroad or actually sincerely believed that he could best influence the situation in Rhodesia by means of a political organization based abroad will never be known. Nevertheless, the fact of the matter is that these incidents cast doubt upon Nkomo's personal courage and dedication to the nationalist cause. As will be seen later on, they were contributing factors in the formation of ZANU in 1963 by his disenchanted lieutenants who had lost confidence in his leadership ability.

Throughout his political career, Nkomo repeatedly did things that either made him appear to be nothing more than an ambitious opportunist or, much worse, seemed to compromise his fellow nationalists and their goals. Nkomo's habits of making poor decisions and negotiating separate agreements with the white government, usually without consulting his advisers and allies, did nothing for his reputation as a black nationalist leader. Indeed, the combination of his poor decisions, willingness to compromise on principle when it was expedient to do so, exclusion of his nationalist comrades in the decision-making process, apparent fraternization with the enemy, and constant self-aggrandizement eventually cost him the trust of the black majority in Zimbabwe.

The earliest hint that Nkomo was probably more interested in furthering his own career than in furthering the nationalist cause came in January 1954 when Nkomo deserted the UNP to run against Mike Hove as an independent candidate for the Matabeleland seat in the federal election. Although Nkomo was defeated by Hove in this election, this





was the first indication that Nkomo had no intention of being a number-two man and would desert both his party and his comrades to insure this.

That Nkomo was more than capable of making bad decisions, and probably willing to compromise on basic principles, was demonstrated at the 1961 London Constitutional Conference. As mentioned earlier, Nkomo, at the invitation of Sir Edger Whitehead, the Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, attended the conference as the NDP representative. On 7 February 1961, agreement was reached over the main provisions of the new constitution, including one that provided for a parliamentary structure that consisted of fifty "A" Roll (white) and fifteen "B" Roll (black) seats. The effect of this provision was to reinforce minority rule of black by whites. Nkomo had agreed to this parliamentary structure. The NDP executive council unanimously rejected the constitutional proposals for franchise and representation. Nkomo, although he initially defended his actions and those of his fellow constitutional delegates, soon came to realize that the opposition from the NDP executive was too strong. On 8 February 1961, Nkomo issued a statement in which he repudiated the constitutional agreement. In explaining why he had changed his mind, Nkomo noted that "a leader is he who expresses the wishes of his followers; no sane leader can disregard the voice of his people and supporters." [Ref. 68] This action by Nkomo damaged his credibility with all of the parties involved. The British and Southern Rhodesian governments felt that Nkomo could not be trusted to adhere to an agreement. The nationalists, on the other hand, felt that Nkomo would commit them to agreements without consulting them and thus compromise them on basic principles. In spite of his repudiation of the constitution, Nkomo was never able to completely neutralize the effects of this incident.



As was mentioned several times earlier in this paper, the events leading up to the formation of ZANU typified some of Nkomo's leadership weaknesses. After Nkomo completed his term of detention in Rhodesia in 1962, he called for a meeting of the ZAPU executive council in Dar-es-Salaam. At this conference, which began on 12 April 1963, Nkomo proposed his plans to form a government-in-exile in Tanzania. President Nyerere and the ZANU executive council, as discussed earlier, opposed Nkomo on this issue on the grounds that Nkomo's leadership was needed inside Southern Rhodesia and that the liberation struggle could only be successful if ZAPU operated from inside of Rhodesia. Additionally, the ZAPU executive council, which was beginning to have doubts about Nkomo's leadership abilities, called for the formation of a new political party to replace the banned ZAPU and a more aggressive policy of confrontation against the white Rhodesian regime. Nkomo disagreed with both of these proposals. At this time Nkomo was convinced that Southern Rhodesia would receive its independence as part of a package deal to end the Central African Federation. He believed that it was necessary for a powerful nationalist organization to be in existence outside of the country to negotiate the terms of the independence with the British. This was in direct conflict with the beliefs of the ZAPU executive committee which believed independence and majority rule could not be obtained through negotiation but would have to be taken by force. [Ref. 69]

Not wishing to yield to the wishes of the ZAPU executive council, Nkomo returned to Salisbury on 2 July 1963. Once back in Rhodesia, Nkomo made plans to hold an open conference at Cold Comfort Farm on 10 August 1963. Nkomo's purpose in holding the conference was to reassert his own leadership of ZAPU and his authority over the ZAPU



executive council. Nkomo invited all members of ZAPU, including the ZAPU executive council, to the Cold Comfort Farm Conference. The executive council declined the invitation.

Nkomo's true colors had been made clear to the ZAPU executive council while it was in Dar-es-Salaam. The doubts about Nkomo's dedication to their cause and his willingness to undergo self-sacrifices were reaffirmed by his proposal for an external government and his preference for negotiating for change with the Rhodesian regime and the British. But Nkomo had also shown himself to be an unethical, dishonest opportunist. He had seduced the executive council to Tanzania by lying to them. He had told them that Nyerere had requested their presence in Tanzania. In fact, when the council members arrived in Tanzania, Nyerere told them that he was very surprised to see them there and that they were more needed in Rhodesia [Ref. 70]. Then, Nkomo had refused to go along with the wishes of his own duly-constituted executive council as he was legally obliged to. To add injury to insult, Nkomo left eleven members of the executive council financially stranded in Dar-es-Salaam so that he could return to Rhodesia to lobby against their wishes. En route to Rhodesia, Nkomo stopped in a number of African countries to appeal to their leaders for support for him at the upcoming Addis Ababa Conference in May 1963 which would establish the Organization of African Unity. [Ref. 71]

On 8 August 1963, ZANU was formed (under the leadership of the Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole) after seven of the eleven ZAPU executive council members had voted to depose Nkomo. At Cold Comfort Farm on 10 August 1963, in front of more than 5,000 ZAPU members, Nkomo reaffirmed himself as the leader of ZAPU and suspended the rebellious executive council members from the nationalist movement. In his Cold





Comfort Farm speech, Nkomo was vague, if not dishonest, in explaining the recent events within ZAPU. Describing the Dar-es-Salaam conference, he said:

Ten of us who were in Dar-es-Salaam then discussed. Duties were allocated to each one of us. After full consultations with everyone concerned, we all got down to carrying out our respective tasks. One of the important duties of our plan was that after a certain stage, I and a certain number of my colleagues had to return home. This, it was agreed, would be after the Addis Ababa Conference. [Ref. 72]

Nkomo said nothing about the opposition of the executive council to his plans nor of his efforts to sabotage the efforts of the executive council with other African states before and during the Addis-Ababa Conference. Talking about the support he had supposedly received for his plans from other African countries at the Addis Ababa Conference, Nkomo said that:

The conference went off very well. Our case was well received. To suggest any form of reluctance by any of the independent countries because of one reason or another is the biggest lie ever told about our political and diplomatic relations with African countries. [Ref. 73]

In fact a number of African countries, including Ghana and Algeria, were critical of Nkomo's plans. They criticized his plans for an external government and his inaction within Southern Rhodesia. [Ref. 74] Thus, by August 1963, Nkomo's weakness as a nationalist leader had become quite apparent and had caused a complete split in the nationalist movement. Evidentially, Nkomo's position of supremacy within the nationalist movement was more important to him than the strength, solidarity, and effectiveness of the movement itself.

During the period he was under detention between 1964 and 1974, Nkomo kept a relatively low profile as a nationalist leader. Indeed, he was in the public eye on only three occasions. The first was when he was flown to Salisbury on 29 October 1965 to discuss the UDI problem with



British Prime Minister Harold Wilson. The next occasion was when he was again summoned to Salisbury to meet with George Thompson, the Commonwealth Secretary, in the course of further negotiations between Harold Wilson and Ian Smith following the breakdown of the Fearless negotiations. Nkomo's final public appearance as a detainee was on 10 February 1972 when he was interviewed by the Pearce Commission. During this period, ZAPU suffered because of Nkomo's inability to exercise the necessary leadership over the organization. In particular, as discussed earlier, in 1969 and 1970 there were dramatic rifts between the military and political wings of ZAPU. There were several reasons for these rifts. The first reason was that the credibility of the guerrilla commanders had suffered because of their battlefield defeats in 1967 and 1968. Second, there were disagreements along ethnic lines between the Shona and Kalanga leaders of ZAPU. Finally, Nkomo was unable to communicate with either his guerrilla commanders or the political leaders and this precluded a truly coordinated effort within ZAPU.

Between the time Nkomo was released from detention in 1974 and the 1979 Lancaster House Agreement, he made several efforts to negotiate a separate settlement with Ian Smith. In December 1974, Nkomo was a signatory to agreements forming the new ANC, which, as previously discussed, was an organization that combined the ANC, ZAPU, ZANU, and FROLIZI. The purpose of this organization was to provide a united front of all the nationalist organizations to negotiate directly with the Smith regime. After talks between the ANC and the Smith regime broke down at Victoria Falls on 26 August 1975, Nkomo began secret negotiations with Ian Smith for a separate settlement. On 11 September 1975, Bishop Muzorewa expelled Nkomo from the ANC for initiating



unauthorized negotiations with and collaborating with the Smith government. Nkomo, who desired to head the ANC himself, responded by challenging Muzorewa's authority and holding his own ANC congress in late September 1975. At this conference, which was attended by 6,000 mostly pro-Nkomo delegates, Nkomo was elected president of his own offshoot of the ANC. Shortly after this, Nkomo began preliminary meetings with Smith to discuss the possibility of reopening formal negotiations. On 1 December 1975, Smith and Nkomo announced their intent to negotiate a constitutional settlement. As discussed earlier, the negotiations, which began in early March 1976, collapsed on 19 March 1976.

The effect of this whole incident was extremely detrimental to Nkomo's image as a nationalist leader. First, Nkomo appeared to be an opportunist who would collaborate with anyone in order to become the dominant nationalist leader in Rhodesia. Second, it appeared that, by negotiating with Smith, Nkomo was playing into his hands in his efforts to divide and conquer the nationalist movement by encouraging rifts within it. Finally, Nkomo appeared to be compromising with, if not yielding to, Smith on basic principles. The Victoria Falls Conference had broken down over the issue of majority rule. If Smith was willing to negotiate with Nkomo it could only be because Nkomo was not as adamant as the other nationalist leaders over the procedures for obtaining majority rule. Thus, it appeared that Nkomo was selling out the nationalists to enhance his own position after a settlement.

Nkomo would make the same mistake again in August 1978. At this time, Nkomo was a partner with Robert Mugabe in the Patriotic Front. Remembering 1976, Ian Smith believed that Nkomo might be the more moderate of the nationalist leaders and thus might be again willing to





negotiate a separate agreement. Admidst an intensification of the guerrilla war, Nkomo, without the knowledge of his partner, Robert Mugabe, met secretly with Ian Smith in Zambia on 14 August 1978. Unfortunately for Nkomo, all prospects for a Smith-Nkomo deal were shattered when ZAPU shot down the Rhodesian airliner on 4 September 1978. Was Nkomo an idealist looking for a peaceful solution or a political opportunist trying to get the best deal for himself? To the other nationalist leaders, it appeared that Nkomo was an opportunist who had again tried to sell them out. Nkomo's credibility within the nationalist movement was shattered and he would never be completely trusted again.

#### 4. Guerrilla Base

Nkomo's failures in the February 1980 elections were due at least in part to earlier ZIPRA failures in the guerrilla war. The elections showed that ZIPRA did not have as much influence in the country as Nkomo claimed. In addition, the ways in which Nkomo utilized, or did not utilize, his guerrilla forces again raised questions about Nkomo's integrity and real motivations.

As discussed elsewhere in this study, both ZIPRA and ZANLA, after their defeats at the hands of the security forces in the late 1960's, had decided to change their guerrilla strategy. Greater emphasis was to be placed upon mobilizing the local population in order to provide a popular base of support for the guerrilla forces. ZANLA was much more successful in this respect than was ZIPRA. The difference was due to the methods of establishing this support. ZANLA concentrated on politicizing the population and preparing the people for a sustained and long-drawn-out struggle. Consequently, by the time the February 1980



elections came around, most villages had a ZANU/ZANLA political organization within them. This country-wide political infrastructure was the key to Mugabe's victory. ZIPRA, on the other hand, had sought to mobilize popular support by establishing logistical support centers in the villages and by arousing the people by publicizing its victories over the security forces. The political education of the population was not emphasized by ZIPRA. Thus, while ZIPRA was able to obtain material support from the population in the areas within which it operated, there was no political or ideological basis for this support. Consequently, at election time ZAPU really did not have a political infrastructure with which to run its campaign. While ZANLA's success was due to the fact that it saw the guerrilla struggle as both political and military, ZIPRA ultimately failed because it concentrated on the military aspects and ignored the political aspects. [Ref. 75]

During the 1970's, ZANLA was much more successful in its conduct of the war than was ZIPRA. After the military defeats of the late 1960's, ZIPRA had struggled with internal rivalries and factionalism. While these internal struggles were going on, ZANLA had taken the initiative and picked up momentum in the war effort. ZANLA's North Eastern offensive, which was launched in December 1972 and supported by FRELIMO, was much more ambitious and effective than anything ZIPRA had been able to organize. The defeat of the Portuguese in Mozambique in 1974 provided ZANLA with a new base and opened up a huge border for infiltration of forces into Rhodesia. In 1970, ZANLA's Eastern and Southern offensives insured that ZANLA would maintain the military initiative over ZIPRA and effectively defined the areas in Rhodesia in which Nkomo's ZIPRA forces could not operate if they wanted to avoid clashes with ZANLA. By 1979, it had



become apparent that most of ZIPRA's activities had been confined to most of Matabeleland, North Mashonaland West, and the northern Midlands while ZANLA controlled most of the rest of the country. [Ref. 76]

Thus, because of the high levels of ZANU politicization and ZANLA military activity throughout Rhodesia and the relative inactivity in these areas by ZAPU/ZIPRA, it became obvious to most of the population by 1980 that ZANLA had shouldered most of the burden of the guerrilla struggle. In fact, ZANLA had won the war.

Nkomo's hopes for the 1980 elections were given another damaging blow when it became public knowledge that he had been holding out on his ZANLA comrades. By late 1977, there were approximately 10,000 to 11,000 ZANLA guerrillas in Rhodesia. ZIPRA, on the other hand, had only about twenty-five percent of its forces, on 2,500 to 3,000 men, fighting in Rhodesia. [Ref. 77] By the 1980 elections, ZANU claimed to have 21,000 trained guerrillas in Zimbabwe while ZAPU had only about 12,000 [Ref. 78]. To make matters worse, Nkomo's Zambia based army was trained, much of it as a conventional force, by the Soviets and equipped with modern Soviet weapons. At the same time, the Soviets had refused to equip or train ZANLA forces. This imbalance of forces brought accusations from ZANU that Nkomo was holding his army in reserve in Zambia to defeat ZANU in any post-independence civil war between the two organizations. Thus, Nkomo was suspected of allowing ZANLA to win the war for him after which he planned to eliminate ZANLA with his own army. [Ref. 79]

Whether or not Nkomo actually planned to use his forces to eliminate ZANU will never be known. What is clear, though, is that by the 1980 elections, ZANLA was the most influential military force in Rhodesia. It had





successfully politicized a large percentage of the population and earned their support and loyalty. Additionally, it had shouldered the largest burden of the fight, without the benefit of Soviet assistance. Finally, Mugabe was able to capitalize on Nkomo's refusal to commit his forces in Rhodesia in order to cast further doubts on his character, motives, and ultimate goals. Thus, while Nkomo had a sizeable military force in March 1980, it was of no assistance to him in the elections. In fact, because of its lack of activity and location in Zambia, ZIPRA was probably a political liability to Nkomo.

## 5. Ethnic Base

One reason for Nkomo's failure in the 1980 elections was that he failed to expand his ethnic base. Joshua Nkomo belongs to the Ndebele tribal group. As of 1980, Ndebele speakers, which include the Ndebele (14%) and the Kalanga (5%) made up 19% of the African population in Zimbabwe. Shona speakers, which include the Karanga (22%), Zezuru (18%), Manyika (13%), Korekore (12%), Ndau (3%), and other miscellaneous small groups, made up approximately 74% of the African population. [Ref. 80] Generally speaking, the Ndebele occupy the western third of Zimbabwe while the Shona dominate the eastern two-thirds of the country [Ref. 81]. That Nkomo was unable to ethnically diversify ZAPU beyond its largely Ndebele base was reflected in the March 1980 election results.

Parliamentary election results show that ZANU-PF took 62.99% of the votes cast (57 seats) while PF-ZAPU took 24.11% (20 seats) and the UANC took only 8.28% (3 seats). ZANU claimed widespread loyalty among all the electorates except the two Matabeleland provinces where PF-ZAPU won fifteen of sixteen contested seats. The regional breakdown of the election results is as follows:



Party	Votes	% of Vote	Seats
Manicaland--11 seats			
ZANU-PF	262,972	84.13	11
UANC	19,608	6.23	0
PF-ZAPU	4,992	1.58	0
Mashonaland Central--6 seats			
ZANU-PF	146,665	83.84	6
UANC	14,985	8.57	0
PF-ZAPU	3,947	2.26	0
Mashonaland East--15 seats			
ZANU-PF	505,813	90.45	14
UANC	75,237	11.90	2
PF-ZAPU	28,805	4.56	0
Mashonaland West--8 seats			
ZANU-PF	203,567	71.95	6
PF-ZAPU	37,888	13.39	1
UANC	28,728	10.15	1
Matabeleland North--10 seats			
PF-ZAPU	313,435	79.05	9
ZANU-PF	39,819	10.04	1
UANC	30,274	7.64	0
Matabeleland South--5 seats			
PF-ZAPU	148,745	96.43	6
ZANU-PF	11,787	6.85	0
UANC	5,615	3.26	0
Midlands--12 seats			
ZANU-PF	209,092	59.72	3
PF-ZAPU	94,960	27.12	4
UANC	30,245	8.64	0
Victoria--11 seats			
ZANU-PF	285,277	87.32	11
UANC	14,615	4.47	0
PF	6,107	1.87	0
[Ref. 82]			

The problem of tribalism in ZAPU surfaced as early as 1969. As discussed earlier, there were repeated disagreements between the members of the ZAPU executive council over how the organization was to be governed while Nkomo was under detention. One faction consisted of the Sindebele speaking Kalingas of the executive council and included J.D. Moyo, the treasurer, George Silundika, the publicity director, and Masocha Ndlova, the assistant secretary. The other faction led by James Chikerema, the acting president and George Nyandoro, the secretary-general, consisted entirely of Shonas. After repeated disputes in 1970 and 1971, Chikerema and Nyandoro left ZAPU in October 1971 to



form FROLIZI. Although ethnicity played an important role in this dispute, it is important to note that the central difference between the two groups concerned the guerrilla strategy that was to be implemented. The two factions were not able to agree on how to best mobilize the popular support among the masses. Although ZAPU eventually regrouped behind Moyo, the organization was never able to politicize the population to the extent necessary to insure a strong base of support.

After Nkomo was released from detention in 1974, he was always careful to insure that there was a balance between Ndebele and Shona speakers on his executive council in order to prevent any future splits within the party. Nevertheless, critics continued to accuse him of placing Shonas in token leadership positions in order to disguise the Ndebele orientation of the party. Responding to these accusations, Nkomo ran some of his most senior Shona leaders as PF-ZANU candidates in the Mashonaland constituencies in the 1980 elections. All of these candidates, with the exception of Austin Chambati, who ran in Mashonaland West, were defeated. Martyn Gregory notes that one of the ironies of this defeat is that what started out as an effort by Nkomo to increase the prestige of the Shonas in ZAPU actually resulted in the strengthening of the Ndebele position. [Ref. 83]

During the election campaign, Nkomo made other efforts to neutralize the accusations of Ndebele favoritism. ZAPU attempted to exploit the popularly held view of Nkomo as the "father of Zimbabwean nationalism" and to emphasize his position as a national leader rather than as a regional or tribal leader. When Nkomo returned from exile in Zambia, his first stop was at a rally in Salisbury, not in his home city of Bulawayo in Matabeleland. In his campaign speeches





he continually emphasized the need for peace, national reconciliation, and the burying of personal and tribal animosities.

Yet, Nkomo's efforts to broaden ZAPU's ethnic base were unsuccessful for several reasons. First of all, ZAPU had not politicized the population in order to provide a reinforcing political infrastructure for the elections. Secondly, ZIPRA, despite being well trained and equipped by the Soviets and achieving a number of flamboyant successes against the Rhodesian security forces, did not have as much prestige among the people as did ZANLA. ZIPRA had confined its activities mostly to Matabeleland, North Mashonaland West, and the northern Midlands. ZANLA was active in most of the rest of the country. Consequently, by the 1980 elections, ZANLA was, if not in control of more of the country, at least better known in more of the country than was ZIPRA. Finally, ZANU's decision to run separately from ZAPU in the elections was probably, at least to a certain extent, due to its view of Nkomo as a tribalist. During the Lancaster House Conference, Mugabe received messages from the ZANU treasurer in Salisbury, Enos Nkala, which advised him that Nkomo was only expected to win seats in Matabeleland and that he should therefore be viewed as an electoral liability. [Ref. 84]

## 6. External Supporters

The Soviet Union, sometimes assisted by allies such as East Germany and North Korea, was Joshua Nkomo's oldest and most consistently loyal external supporter. This support began in 1965 when the first group of fifty-two ZAPU recruits went to Moscow, Pyongyang, and Peking to undergo military training. Shortly after that time, ZAPU ceased sending recruits to China and looked mostly to the



Soviet-bloc countries for support. Soviet support of ZAPU continued throughout the war. In 1976, Rhodesian military intelligence reported that between 1970 and 1976 ZIPRA, although it was playing a very small role in the war, had been sending large numbers of guerrillas on extended courses in Russia, Cuba, and North Korea [Ref. 85]. In May 1978, Cuba and East Germany began airlifting massive quantities of food and medical supplies to Zambia to aid ZAPU sponsored refugees [Ref. 86]. In June 1978, Nkomo visited Moscow, Havana, and a number of eastern European capitals to seek increased support for his cause [Ref. 87]. Between February and July 1978, approximately 2,000 ZIPRA guerrillas based in Zambia attended a six-month Cuban operated training course in Angola where they were trained not only in guerrilla tactics, but also in conventional military tactics. During that same period, seventy-two Cuban advisers in Zambia instructed ZIPRA forces in the use of light artillery and rocket launchers. [Ref. 88] In September 1978, it was reported that the Soviet Union had provided the ZIPRA guerrillas in Zambia with 137 SAM-7 missiles [Ref. 89]. Throughout the fall and winter of 1978-79, both humanitarian and military aid from the Soviet Union, the German Democratic Republic, Cuba, and Yugoslavia to ZAPU increased. Thus, by the April 1979 Rhodesian elections, Nkomo had a relatively large Soviet supplied and Cuban trained conventional force in Zambia. Feeling confident in his military situation, Nkomo announced on 15 April 1979 that the Rhodesian government no longer had a monopoly on sophisticated weaponry and that his Cuban trained ZIPRA fighters were prepared to introduce sophisticated weaponry against the Rhodesian security forces [Ref. 90].

Eastern block aid to ZAPU intensified during the year the Muzorewa government was in office. On 28 May 1979,



the London Daily Telegraph reported that the nature of Soviet assistance to Nkomo's Zambian based guerrilla forces had changed dramatically. Russian aid had changed from advising, training, and supplying war materials to direct control and organization of the ZIPRA military effort. The Russian effort was directed by Mr. Vassily Solodnikov, the Soviet ambassador to Lusaka, who was also a senior KGB officer. The article reported that the increased Soviet involvement with ZAPU had been prepared by a twelve-man team of Soviet officials assigned to Nkomo's movement in Lusaka in 1978. The team had recommended drastic changes in ZIPRA after reviewing the logistics, operations, intelligence, communications, reconnaissance, and general staff procedures of the army. As a result, a number of ZIPRA commanders were dismissed while others were sent to the Soviet Union for training. No one who had not attended a training course in the Soviet Union held an important position in ZIPRA. Delivery of military supplies to ZIPRA, including mortars, anti-personnel mines, rocket launchers, and SAM-7 missiles was stepped-up considerably. [Ref. 91] Other examples of increased eastern block support to ZAPU were common during this period. In June 1979, in a meeting between GDR President Erich Honecker and Joshua Nkomo, the former denounced the new Smith-Muzorewa regime and reaffirmed East Germany's support of ZAPU [Ref. 92]. In late July 1979, the Zimbabwe-Rhodesia Military Command reported that it was intercepting increasing quantities of communist made arms during clashes with ZAPU guerrillas [Ref. 93].

Overall, Nkomo's close relationship with the Soviet Union was probably a hindrance to him in the 1980 elections. There are several reasons why this aid was harmful to Nkomo's efforts to become Zimbabwe's prime minister. The first involves the problem of politicization of the





population. As discussed earlier, Nkomo's election campaign was seriously damaged because ZAPU had failed to establish a political infrastructure in the villages. This was due in a large part to the Soviet theories of guerrilla warfare, which differ from the Maoist approach adopted by ZANU. The basic difference between the two philosophies of guerrilla war were well described by Rex Nhongo when he left ZAPU to join ZANU in 1971. Finding the ZANU and Chinese emphasis on political education much greater than that of the Russians, Nhongo noted that:

In the Soviet Union they had told us that the decisive factor of the war is the weapons. When I got to Itumbi, where there were Chinese instructors, I was told that the decisive factor was the people. This was a contradiction. Now I agree with the Chinese. [Ref. 94]

The Chinese method was to teach the masses why the guerrillas were fighting so that they would support the guerrillas. The Soviet emphasis on weaponry and conventional engagements with the security forces prevented ZAPU from establishing a grass-roots political organization within the villages that could provide a base of support for Nkomo's election campaign.

The second detrimental effect of Soviet aid was that it probably made Nkomo appear to be too dependent upon the Soviets. Mugabe and ZANU did not have any single dominant source of support. Nkomo, on the other hand, received the vast majority of his support from the Soviets. Consequently, he was always open to accusations that he was really just fronting for the Soviets. Nkomo's election prospects worsened in April 1979 when accusations were made that ZAPU was completely controlled by the Soviets. [Ref. 95]

This question of Nkomo's dependency upon the Russians was further complicated by the fact that Mugabe had tried and failed to get aid from the Soviets for ZANU.



Thus, Mugabe was able to use this apparent advantage of Nkomo's to his disadvantage. He could show that ZANLA, without Russian assistance, did more fighting than ZIPRA. He could argue that Nkomo was holding his Russian equipped forces in reserve in Zambia so that they would be available to defeat his opponents (i.e., Mugabe and ZANU) in a post-independence civil war. Finally, he could cast doubts about the true intentions of Nkomo and his Russian supporters by suggesting that they were not truly dedicated to the nationalist cause because they were not interested in supporting all the nationalists in the PF. Questioned on this issue in May 1979, Mr. Mugabe stated that:

We still do not receive direct arms shipments from Russia and we have never condemned them for that. But we have argued that such equipment should be shared by all those fighting in Zimbabwe. Now that we have unity, this should not be a problem.

As far as ZANU is concerned, we have plenty of weapons with which to fight the war, but what we need badly is sophisticated equipment like ground to air missiles and long-range rockets. The war is changing and these are the weapons we need. [Ref. 96]

Oddly enough, the only other external supporter who had an effect on Nkomo's ability to win the 1980 election was his old adversary, Ian Smith. On 1 February 1980, Ian Smith deserted Bishop Muzorewa and called on the white minority to support Nkomo's party. Noting that although Nkomo might be distasteful, Smith called for opposition to Mugabe because he was a Marxist with which there could be no compromise. Expressing doubts about Muzorewa's political and leadership abilities, Smith suggested that Nkomo's brand of nationalist leadership would offer the best future for black and white Rhodesians. Although whites could not vote for African parties, Smith called on the whites to support Nkomo's party. Warning the whites of the danger of a Mugabe victory, Smith said:



Tell your workers that the Marxists will take everything they have: their goats, their cattle, and chickens. Tell them they will also take away their children. [Ref. 97]

When one has a supporter like Ian Smith he doesn't need any enemies. This event was the fatal blow to Nkomo's credibility. Again he was being accused of fraternizing with the RF and of making a political deal and compromising his principles at the expense of his fellow nationalists. Thus, Smith's actions had an effect exactly opposite of what he had intended.

## B. BISHOP ABEL MUZOREWA

### 1. Biographical Background

Abel Tendekayi Muzorewa was born on 14 April 1925 to a peasant family living at the Old Umtali Methodist Center. Muzorewa's father, Haadi Philemon Muzorewa, traced his ancestry back through the Makombe tribe, whose members had fled Mozambique during the days of Portuguese rule. His fraternal grandmother was a member of one of the royal houses of the Makoni tribe, who came from the area between Salisbury and Umtali. Muzorewa's maternal grandfather was a member of one of the royal families of the Zimunya tribe while his grandmother was a Warozvi Shona, the ancestors of which were credited with building ancient Zimbabwe. If Muzorewa's ethnic background was mixed, his religious background certainly was not. Both of Muzorewa's parents were very strict, devout Methodists, his father serving the church as a pastor and teacher. The lives of Abel and his eight brothers and sisters revolved, spiritually and socially, around the Methodist Church. Muzorewa describes his childhood in the following manner:

Discipline, sharp temper, humour--those words summarize my upbringing. Add regular Bible lessons plus Church-going, and you have the ingredients which have moulded my character and that of my five brothers and three sisters. [Ref. 98]





Muzorewa credited his parents' religious convictions with forming his character. In later life, his actions as a nationalist leader, specifically his emphasis on moderation and negotiation, would be effected by his family and religious upbringing. Muzorewa further elucidates this point when he says in his autobiography that:

My father's deep religious convictions, and the irreproachable life in which he lived out what he preached on Sundays, left an indelible impression upon me.

Like father, my mother is a devout person. Hers however was a faith which taught more through persuasion, compassion, and example than through formal teaching and discipline. This was effective and long-lasting. [Ref. 99]

As tribal tradition required for the first-born child, Muzorewa spent his early years with his maternal grandparents who lived at the foot of Mount Samzaguru near Tikweri Mountain in the Makoni Reserve. At the age of nine, Muzorewa began his Sub-standard A education at the Chinyadza School, which was run by English Methodist missionaries. When Abel was thirteen years old, his father sent him to the Old Umtali boarding school for further education. While at Old Umtali, Muzorewa underwent what he calls his "spiritual rebirth":

Although I had been brought up in a devout Christian home, I made that morning my own commitment to follow Christ as my Savior. On that day of days Christ gave me a spiritual microscope, spectacles, and earphones to see and hear for myself what Christ offers. I realized that I was a sinner, but that God loves me and forgives me. [Ref. 100]

I believe that the Christian faith gives a unity and a centre to all of life. It is an ethic not just for the professional minister, but for every believer. It is a call to each person to seek Christ in his personal life. With it you can go anywhere in the world, to work as a farmer or driver, politician, or nurse, and find Christ to be your source of happiness, strength, and victory. [Ref. 101]

Muzorewa remained at Umtali until 1941 when he finished Standard Four. That year he transferred to a



Methodist school at Nyadiri where, in 1943, he received a Standard Five certificate. Between 1944 and 1948, Muzorewa served as a teacher in the lower primary school grades and as a lay evangelist. He then entered the Hartzell Theological Seminary, Old Umtali. After completing his theological studies, he was ordained a minister of the Methodist Church in August 1953. After working as a pastor in the Rusape area for five years, Muzorewa went on a scholarship to the United States to study for a theological degree. He spent the years from 1958 through 1962 in colleges in Missouri and Tennessee and earned a Bachelor's Degree and a Master's Degree. Upon returning to Rhodesia, he became the pastor of the Old Umtali Mission. In 1964, Muzorewa was appointed the national director of the church's Christian Youth Movement and in 1966 he became the secretary of the Student Youth Movement. Muzorewa was consecrated a bishop of the United Methodist Church in Rhodesia at a ceremony at Basutoland in August 1968. Thus, he became the first black bishop ever in the United Methodist Church in Rhodesia. [Ref. 102]

## 2. Early Political Career

Bishop Muzorewa first became well-known to the general public in September 1971 when the Rhodesian authorities banned him from entering the Tribal Trust Lands. At the time, Muzorewa was a pastor in the upper-middle class black residential suburb of Marimba Park and was working out of an office in Salisbury. The reason for the banning was that Muzorewa had spoken out against government proposals to tax church managed black schools and government policies on black land tenure. Up to this time, Muzorewa's involvement in public politics had been very limited. This was all soon to change.



In the fall of 1971, it became apparent that the British government was again anxious to solve the Rhodesian crisis. As discussed earlier in this study, the fruits of the British-Rhodesian efforts were the Smith-Home proposals. Since the proposals were basically amendments to the illegal 1969 constitution and since black nationalist leaders had not even been consulted during their formulation, there was wide-spread black opposition to the Smith-Home proposals. In October 1971, four former members of the ZAPU and ZANU executive councils, Edson Sithole, Michael Mawema, Cephas Msipa, and Josiah Chinamano, decided to form a new unity movement to oppose the constitutional settlement proposals. Using the same initials as the first Zimbabwean nationalist movement, the African National Congress, they named it the African National Council (ANC). In order that their efforts at mobilizing popular opposition to the proposals and in negotiating with the British and Rhodesian governments might be successful, they needed to find a neutral leader of national reputation who had been a member of neither ZAPU nor ZANU. As a politically neutral but well known national religious leader, Muzorewa fit the bill. In November 1971, the four nationalist leaders approached Bishop Muzorewa and asked him to lead the ANC in its fight against the Smith-Home proposals. After much thought, Muzorewa agreed to their request and on 16 December 1971 the African National Council was officially founded. [Ref. 103] As was discussed at length earlier in this study, Bishop Muzorewa and the ANC were successful in mobilizing enough support to convince the Pearce Commission that the constitutional proposals were not acceptable to the majority of Africans and the British government abandoned the Smith-Home proposals.





This series of events was very significant for Muzorewa's future. First of all, Muzorewa very suddenly emerged as the best known nationalist leader within Zimbabwe. What is interesting about this is that Muzorewa, unlike Nkomo, did not seek national political stature. He was perfectly satisfied to be solely a religious leader. But when he was drafted, he accepted the challenge. Ironically, Muzorewa was selected to head the ANC because he was relatively apolitical and unknown in the political world. Nevertheless, Muzorewa would soon find that he too liked politics and would aspire to a position of national leadership. Finally, Muzorewa would arrive on the national political scene as a man of God whose personal reputation and integrity were above reproach. But, like Nkomo, seven years later he would enter the national elections as a candidate whose personal honor and true motivations were very much in doubt among the electorate. Never again would Muzorewa's reputation as a nationalist leader be as high as it was in 1972.

### 3. Smith-Muzorewa Negotiations

Although the ANC had been created solely to oppose the Smith-Home proposals, Muzorewa saw a further role for the organization as a base from which to urge whites to discuss an alternative settlement. Although the original ANC executive broke up when its senior members either left the country or were arrested, Muzorewa continued to address white groups and to consult with the more progressive parties, such as the Centre Party and the Rhodesia Party, over the possibility of reaching a new settlement. In early 1973, Smith and Muzorewa began unofficial discussions. On 10 March 1973, the ANC became a legal political party. Finally, on 17 July 1973, during a peak in the guerrilla



war, Ian Smith invited Muzorewa to begin official talks on a constitutional settlement.

Smith and Muzorewa held over fourteen meetings during the next ten months, the details of which were discussed earlier in this paper. On 20 June 1974, the talks broke down. Like Nkomo, Muzorewa had damaged his reputation by undertaking negotiations with an uncompromising Ian Smith. First of all, he had been discredited with the mainstream of the nationalist movement when, on 20 March 1974, six members of the imprisoned ZANU executive council, including Sithole and Mugabe, wrote a letter condemning Muzorewa for negotiating with the illegal regime and calling on him to cease negotiations immediately. Obviously, Muzorewa was in no position to negotiate if he did not have the backing of those who controlled the guerrillas. Second, as discussed earlier, after the talks broke down Ian Smith leaked a report that Muzorewa had agreed to a settlement based upon the 1971 proposals. A document to this effect, dated 17 August 1973 and signed by Bishop Muzorewa, was reprinted in the Rhodesian Herald on 27 September 1974. Since Muzorewa had previously denied the existence of any such agreement, this incident was extremely damaging to his reputation. The Rhodesian Front called him dishonest for reneging on an agreement. The nationalists condemned him for selling out on their principles. In reality, Muzorewa probably signed the agreement either without reading it or before Ian Smith had added certain previously agreed to amendments. In any case, Muzorewa came out of the incident looking like either a traitor to his cause or a naive fool or both. His reputation as a nationalist leader would never completely recover from this incident. [Ref. 104]

In December 1974, the leaders of ZANU, ZAPU, and FROLIZI (Sithole, Nkomo, and Chikerema respectively), at the



urgings of the presidents of the Frontline States, agreed to dissolve their organizations and form a united front under the name of the African National Council with Muzorewa as its president. The mission of the new ANC was to negotiate directly with the Rhodesian government in order to bring about a peace settlement and majority rule. The failure of the new ANC at the Victoria Falls Conference, the internal bickering among the four nationalist leaders, and the eventual break-up of the organization were discussed at length earlier in this paper. Let it be said, however, that the failures of the new ANC were due in no small part to the leadership shortcomings of Muzorewa. Muzorewa's ineffectiveness as a leader manifested itself in a number of ways. Ian Smith was able to play upon the rivalry between Muzorewa and Nkomo to divide the organization. Muzorewa demonstrated that he lacked political insight. He worked fairly well with Sithole of ZANU, but failed to realize that Sithole was on the way out as the leader of ZANU and no longer had control of his guerrillas. Thus, Muzorewa could never hope to negotiate with Smith from a position of strength as he had influence over neither ZANLA nor ZIPRA. The final blow to Muzorewa as the leader of the new ANC came in September 1975 when, in the "Mgagao Declaration," the members of the ZANLA DARE condemned him for appointing incompetent politicians instead of guerrilla leaders to lead the ZLA, the military wing of the ANC-formed ZLC. The ZANLA DARE also condemned Muzorewa, along with Sithole, as an incompetent, inefficient leader. Thus, by late 1976, when Sithole also defected from the new ANC, Muzorewa's organization was in a shambles. The united front had proved to be nothing more than an illusion. A strong leader might have welded the nationalist organizations into a united, strong ANC, but Muzorewa was not the man to do it.





By late 1976, the situation was becoming ripe for Bishop Muzorewa to be seduced by Ian Smith. When the Geneva Convention convened in October 1976, Bishop Muzorewa found that ZANU and ZAPU had broken with his ANC and were participating in the conference as the Patriotic Front (PF). On 14 December 1976, the convention broke down over the issues of the structure of the interim government and the control of the security forces. On 9 January 1977, the leaders of the Frontline States announced that they were going to support the Patriotic Front as the sole legitimate nationalist organization in Rhodesia. With Muzorewa's prestige within the nationalist movement fading rapidly, Smith felt that he would be very anxious to negotiate a separate internal settlement before he lost his position as a nationalist leader all together. On 24 January 1977, Smith announced that he was rejecting the British proposals at the Geneva Convention and that he wanted to begin negotiations with Muzorewa for a separate internal settlement. Throughout 1977, Muzorewa conducted informal exploratory talks with the Smith regime. The details of these talks and the events surrounding them were discussed earlier in this paper. It is important to note that several events occurred which evidently convinced Muzorewa that reaching a quick agreement with Smith was to his advantage. First, following the lead of the Frontline States, the OAU Liberation Committee announced on 8 February 1977 that it was throwing its support behind the PF and that it would assist it in escalating the guerrilla war. Second, the PF had agreed in substance to the Anglo-American peace proposals and had renewed negotiations with the British. In January 1978, PF leaders met with the Anglo-American representatives at Malta. Muzorewa was angered by British intentions to exclude him from the ceasefire negotiations and feared that



it was part of a scheme to make Nkomo the future leader of Zimbabwe. [Ref. 105] Finally, Muzorewa had gotten Smith to commit himself to majority rule and to one-man, one-vote as a precondition to the talks.

Formal negotiations between Smith and Muzorewa began in November 1977. The internal agreement was signed by Smith, Muzorewa, Chief Chirau, and Sithole on 3 March 1978. The details of the internal settlement were dealt with earlier in this paper. Nevertheless, the significance of the settlement to Muzorewa's political future was that it further damaged his credibility and apparent integrity. He had entered into the agreement without even discussing its terms with the leaders of the PF. Also, it appeared that he had rushed into the agreement in order to undercut Mugabe and Nkomo before they could reach an agreement with the British and insure for himself the primary leadership position in Zimbabwe. Finally, the agreement reserved twenty-eight of the one-hundred assembly seats for the whites, giving them the power of veto, and provided for the control of the police, army, judiciary, and public service by a white-dominated bureaucracy. Consequently, the white minority was still in a position to usurp many of the powers of parliament. Thus, Muzorewa had made an agreement that was contrary to the views and wishes of the other nationalist leaders and organizations and to the majority of black Zimbabweans.

#### 4. The Interim Government and the 1979 Elections

Muzorewa's lack of effectiveness and knack for making bad decisions, or at least being a partner to bad decisions, continued during the period the interim government was in power. On 14 September 1978, the interim provisional government, citing the escalation of the guerrilla



war by ZANLA and ZIPRA, banned ZANU and ZAPU from Rhodesia, thus effectively excluding these two parties from participating in the scheduled national elections. It appeared to most nationalists that Muzorewa was eliminating the competition in order to further entrench his own position. Not only did the transitional government fail to achieve any meaningful social reforms, but Muzorewa himself assisted, wittingly or unwittingly, in the obstruction of reforms. In April 1978, Brian Hove, a member of the UANC and the co-Minister of Justice, Law, and Order, spoke out against police brutality in his first public statement and soon thereafter clashed with his co-Minister, Hilary Squires, over changes in the judiciary and career opportunities for blacks in the police. Squires accused Hove of "breaking the spirit of the agreement" and the ruling Executive Council (Smith, Muzorewa, Sithole, and Chirau) demanded of Hove that he withdraw his remarks. Hove refused and returned to a legal practice in London after only a few days in office. The loss of Hove, a true reformer, cost Bishop Muzorewa a considerable amount of credibility with the Zimbabwean people. [Ref. 106]

Chief among the transitional government's failures, however, was its total lack of success in achieving international recognition, ending the sanctions, or ending the war. The Frontline States continued to support the PF. The United States and Great Britain withheld recognition of the transitional government. In early March 1978, the transitional government appealed to the UN for recognition. On 10 March, Sithole was prevented from addressing the UN General Assembly by a coalition of African, socialist, and third-world countries. Finally, on 14 March 1978, the UN Security Council voted to condemn the interim Rhodesian government. Obviously, in the eyes of the rest of the world, Muzorewa





was not the authentic leader of the Zimbabwean people. Failure to achieve international recognition also meant a failure to end the sanctions and to improve Zimbabwe-Rhodesia's economic condition.

The ineffectiveness of Muzorewa as a leader was no more apparent than in his failure to end the war. Ian Smith had hoped that a settlement with Muzorewa and Sithole would lead to a ceasefire. Instead, much to Smith's chagrin, the war escalated. The reason for this was very simple. Muzorewa had absolutely no control over the ZANLA and ZIPRA guerrillas. Consequently, it was not in his power to end the war.

The national elections, which had been postponed from September 1978, were finally held in April 1979. Muzorewa's UANC, running on a platform of its ability to end the war, achieve international recognition, end the sanctions, and institute social reform, won fifty-one of the seventy-two black seats in Parliament. In June, Muzorewa was sworn in as the Prime Minister of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia. How did Muzorewa manage to win such an overwhelming victory when he ran on a record of failures? Muzorewa and the UANC won the 1979 elections because, since ZANU and ZAPU were legally prohibited from participating in the political life of the country, there was no other influential nationalist party to run against them. The security forces and auxiliaries loyal to Muzorewa were mobilized to insure a high voter turn-out that would make his victory appear to be overwhelming. In short, Muzorewa and the UANC won by default.



## 5. Prime Minister Muzorewa and the 1980 Election Campaign

Bishop Muzorewa's effectiveness as a national leader did not improve during the period he was the prime-minister of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia. The national elections and the implementation of a new constitution had not improved the situation in the country in the slightest. With the civil service, police and security forces still in the hands of the same bureaucracy that ran then during the Rhodesian Front government, very few meaningful social reforms were implemented. Unable to fulfill his election promises of ending the war, obtaining international recognition, and thus legitimacy, and ending the UN sanctions, Muzorewa was finally forced to yield to the pressures of Great Britain, the Commonwealth Nations, the Frontline States, and the PF to agree to an all-parties constitutional conference.

As discussed earlier, the Salisbury government accepted the British constitutional proposals at the very beginning of the Lancaster House talks in September 1979. With the signing of the Lancaster House Agreement in December 1979, the number one priority of the Muzorewa government became the winning of the elections that were scheduled for February 1980. On the surface, it would appear that Muzorewa and the UANC had a number of advantages over ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU in the 1980 election campaign. That the UANC lost the elections despite having these advantages was due largely to Muzorewa's lack of a popular base and the artificiality of his position as a national leader, let alone a nationalist leader.

In January 1980, the same Muzorewa-UANC political machine that had won the 1979 elections was still in place. Thus, Muzorewa, unlike Mugabe and Nkomo, was in the envious



position of being an incumbent who had an election campaign organization with very recent and successful experience at winning elections. The UANC's recent experience in mobilizing the voters and experience in operating under election laws that had remained virtually unchanged by the terms of the Lancaster House Agreement, gave Muzorewa a head start over his competitors. This advantage was magnified by the fact that ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU, who obviously had neither overt political organizations nor recent election campaign experience inside Rhodesia, were not legalized in Rhodesia until more than a month after Muzorewa had begun his election campaign. [Ref. 107]

Bishop Muzorewa also took advantage of his position within the government to enhance his election campaign. In late November 1979, realizing that a final settlement and national elections were just around the corner, Muzorewa released hundreds of political prisoners in the hope of gaining the support of the electorate. Martyn Gregory notes that the trade mark of the UANC during the 1980 election campaign was that it was able to combine its close relationship with the government with its ability to monopolize private transport facilities and key public venues in order to neutralize the opposition parties during the late stages of the campaign. An example of this was the Huruyadzo rally in the Zimbabwe Grounds in Salisbury. The UANC hired nine trains and 500 coaches to ferry supporters from all over the country to the four-day rally. It had been agreed to by the all-party Election Council that, in order to prevent possible violence between the political parties, no two parties would be allowed to hold rallies in the same city or area at the same time. Thus, when the UANC announced its plans to hold this rally from Thursday 21 February to Sunday 24 February, all other parties were prohibited from organ-





izing rallies in the capital on the weekend before the elections. The high cost of this rally also demonstrated the financial resources at Muzorewa's disposal. Nevertheless, a number of other factors effectively neutralized all of Muzorewa's campaigning advantages. [Ref. 108]

## 6. External Supporters

Bishop Muzorewa's election campaign was an extravagant affair that was in many ways very similar to American presidential campaigns. In addition to the usual party hats, T-shirts, and stickers, the ANC provided those who attended the February Salisbury rally with 60,000 free meals every day, free accommodations, and entertainment which included athletics, boxing, wrestling, weightlifting, and film shows. The only political part of the rally occurred when a speech was delivered by Muzorewa, who had made an ostentatious arrival in one of four helicopters lent to the ANC by a West German firm. [Ref. 109] It was readily apparent to all who followed Muzorewa's campaign that it was the finest campaign that money could buy. Bishop Muzorewa's seemingly endless reservoir of funds came principally from three sources--big business (both in southern Africa and in western Europe and the United States), South Africa, and white Rhodesians.

Muzorewa received considerable financial support from business interests in South Africa, the United States, Great Britain, and other western countries. The OAU estimated that the UANC had received more than \$55 million (U.S.) from western business corporations. The Anglo-American Corporation probably donated more than \$5 million to the bishop's campaign. [Ref. 110] In January 1980, it was reported that in Great Britain officials of the Confederation for British Industry (CBI) had met with



Muzorewa to discuss giving financial support to his campaign. Shortly thereafter, a "Zimbabwe-Rhodesia Electoral Fund" was set up in Great Britain. Although CBI officials denied any involvement with the fund, all of the directors of the fund were affiliated with CBI. Most of the money was donated by subsidiaries of British corporations in Rhodesia. Organizers of the fund claimed that there had been no violation of the sanctions as all of the contributions had actually been raised inside of Rhodesia. [Ref. 111] Muzorewa's largest supporters were mining corporations, to include the Lonrho Group, Anglo-American Corporation, American Union Carbide Corporation, and Johannes Consolidated Investment of South Africa.

Throughout the tenure of the Muzorewa government, the bishop and the ANC received considerable financial, military, and political support from both private and government interests in South Africa. In April 1979, the PF sponsored Voice of Zimbabwe reported that the Muzorewa regime was continuing to receive military hardware, primarily counterinsurgency aircraft, from South Africa [Ref. 112]. The aircraft were transhipped through South Africa from arms dealers in the United States and western Europe, in spite of the UN sanctions. That same month, Bishop Muzorewa expressed his support for an economic and military alliance with South Africa. In a South African radio interview, the bishop declared that such cooperation would insure a prosperous future for Zimbabwe-Rhodesia and that such prosperity would in turn assure the stability and independence of the new state. [Ref. 113]

Between June 1978 and July 1979, Bishop Muzorewa made several trips to South Africa in order to gain support for his government from both private individuals and the government [Ref. 114]. Finally, in late 1979, a number of



South African citizens, apparently with the approval and encouragement of the South African government, established the "Fund for Rhodesian Democracy." Formed in order to counter the influence of Russian and other communist countries in southern Africa, the fund provided millions of dollars to Muzorewa's election campaign. [Ref. 115]

The landslide nature of the election results would seem to indicate that Muzorewa's extravagant campaign style and seemingly limitless financial resources were of little help. There are several reasons for this phenomena. First, Muzorewa's close relationship with white business interests both within and outside of Rhodesia damaged his image as a black nationalist leader. Second, the fact that Muzorewa was receiving considerable financial and political support from individuals and in and the government of an apartheid South Africa appeared to the voters to be a contradiction. The UANC, a black nationalist organization, was viewed as fraternizing with the last bastion of racism in southern Africa. Finally, the fact that Bishop Muzorewa himself was somewhat less than candid in disclosing the sources of his campaign funds caused the voters to suspect the worst. When asked by a reporter at a 19 February 1980 press conference about the sources of his campaign funds, Muzorewa replied, "None of your business." When the reporters persisted in this line of questioning, the bishop replied, "I am not interested in answering that question...We have said that it does not matter where we get our funds, as long as it is not from Communists." Matters were not helped when one of Muzorewa's aids, in defending the bishop's brusqueness, said: "What did you expect him to say, that our funds our limitless? We have funds to suit our needs, of course, but what advantage does it give us to admit it." [Ref. 116] The flamboyant style of Muzorewa's election campaign, coupled





with his own secretiveness about his sources of funds, could not help but give the electorate second thoughts about his suitability as a national leader.

## 7. Guerrilla and Ethnic Base

The most striking difference between Muzorewa and his two opponents, Nkomo and Mugabe, was his lack of a base of popular support. Bishop Muzorewa simply did not have the popular support enjoyed by the other two nationalist leaders. Nkomo could call on ZIPRA and the Ndebele-speaking regions of Zimbabwe for support. Mugabe had ZANLA and the Shona majority to back him up. But Bishop Muzorewa had neither an army nor an ethnic group that he could call his own. Consequently, it was nearly impossible for him to organize any kind of country-wide, grass-roots support for his campaign. Mugabe and Nkomo had already cornered the market in that area.

Muzorewa's relationships with the guerrilla organizations had been extremely poor almost from the very beginning of his career. In the early 1970's, Muzorewa was the object of the ire of ZIPRA and ZANLA because he advocated a peaceful negotiated settlement while they were convinced that their goals could be attained only through violent conflict. As chairman of the new ANC, Bishop Muzorewa had again angered the guerrillas by appointing politicians and inexperienced junior officers to command positions in the ZLA. Consequently, ZIPRA and ZANLA never were united under the ZLA.

Muzorewa's poor relations with the guerrillas and lack of influence over them was no better illustrated than during the periods he was a member of the ruling Executive Council and the Prime Minister. During his 1979 election campaign, Muzorewa had campaigned on his ability to end the



war. He had claimed that thousands of PF guerrillas would surrender when they realized that he had achieved the ideals for which they had been fighting. As discussed earlier, this was one of the factor that motivated Ian Smith to come to terms with Muzorewa in the first place. But Prime Minister Muzorewa was unable to convince more than a few guerrillas to surrender to the new government. Instead, the guerrillas intensified the war effort. As prime minister, Muzorewa was also the Minister of Defence and Combined Operations. As such, he had at least nominal control over the security forces. Muzorewa's close identification with the white commanded and manned security forces caused his image as a nationalist political leader to plummet when the security forces intensified the counterinsurgency effort in 1979.

Muzorewa's weaknesses as a national leader were exemplified by his inability and unwillingness to control the security forces. Prior to the March 1978 Internal Settlement, the War Council, which was responsible for prosecuting the war, consisted of the prime minister, who was the chairman, and senior cabinet officers and security force commanders. Just before the signatories of the March 1978 Internal Settlement formed their four-man Executive Council, the prime minister's chairmanship of the War Council was abolished and the seats formerly occupied by the cabinet ministers were assumed by white civil servants. Thus, the black signatories to the settlement were virtually excluded from participating in the decisions affecting military policy. [Ref. 117]

Muzorewa's influence over security matters does not seem to have increased after his election as prime minister in April 1979. The state of martial law, which extended over 90% of the country by mid-1979, enabled the white



security forces to pursue the "suppression of terrorism" without referring to Muzorewa or the Zimbabwe-Rhodesia parliament for guidance. During Muzorewa's administration, guerrilla bases and refugee camps in Mozambique and Zambia were bombed, approximately one-half million people were forcibly confined in "protected villages" in an attempt to starve the guerrillas of their support in the rural areas, and 186 auxiliaries loyal to Sithole were massacred. Incidents like these severely damaged Muzorewa's image as a "man of God" and "champion of unity." During the 1980 election campaign, ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU portrayed Muzorewa as being both responsible for the actions of the security forces and as being impotent in controlling them. Exploiting the situation, the two nationalist organizations sought to show both that Muzorewa was in collusion with the security forces and thus responsible for their atrocities and that he still did not have the power to end the war. Finally, Muzorewa's alienation from the nationalist guerrillas was completed when he came out in favor of the presence of South African troops in Zimbabwe during the election campaign. There were no doubts in the minds of black Zimbabweans that Muzorewa was closer to the former white regime than to them. Muzorewa may have been the prime minister, but the white controlled security forces were still calling the shots. [Ref. 118]

In the final analysis, Muzorewa's downfall was that he was an artificially created leader with a mythical base of support. The great irony is that the conditions and situations that brought Muzorewa to the forefront of the national political scene were the same situations and conditions that would ultimately bring about his downfall. A late-comer to the national political scene, Muzorewa was asked by the nationalists to lead the ANC precisely because





his was a neutral with no national organization or following. Smith negotiated with him because he was apart from the mainstream of the nationalist movement. A candidate with no popular base, Muzorewa was able to win the 1979 elections only because there was no real competition and because of the ability of the security forces to get the voters to the polls. Thus, it should not have been surprising that he collapsed in the 1980 elections. His failure to end the war, to end the sanctions, to achieve international recognition, and to control the security forces had destroyed his credibility as a head of state. Faced with viable competition in the elections and having the support of neither a guerrilla army nor a large sector of the black population, his defeat was inevitable.

## C. ROBERT MUGABE

### 1. Biographical Background

Robert Gabriel Mugabe was born on 21 February 1924 in the "Christian village" at the Jesuit operated Kutama Mission. The son of a carpenter, young Mugabe spent his youth tending cattle, fishing, and boxing with other boys. At Kutama, Mugabe completed six years of primary education and two years of teacher training, which qualified him as a Standard 2 teacher. Initially Mugabe taught at Kutama for the low salary of two pounds per month, and then at a number of other schools in the region. In 1950 he went to Fort Hare University College in South Africa where he obtained the first of six university degrees. (Three of his degrees, a Bachelors and Masters in Law and a Bachelors in Public Administration, would be earned by correspondence while he was in detention.) While in South Africa, Mugabe came into contact with members of the youth wing of the South African



African National Congress and the South African Communist Party. During that period he also started to read the works of Karl Marx. On returning to Rhodesia, Mugabe was frustrated in his attempts to get involved in nationalist politics. He considered himself a revolutionary and a militant and found the nationalist leadership in Rhodesia too conservative for his tastes. In the mid-1950's he moved to Northern Rhodesia where he was exposed to that country's most important nationalist leader, Kenneth Kaunda. Four years later, after Ghana had obtained its independence, Mugabe took a teaching post there. While there, he was heavily influenced by that country's leader, Kwame Nkrumah. It was there that Mugabe met and married his wife, Sally. [Ref. 119]

## 2. The Ascetic Militant

Robert Mugabe is as different from Joshua Nkomo and Bishop Abel Muzorewa as any man could hope to be. The physically imposing Nkomo is a flamboyant showman. Muzorewa is a bible-thumping preacher. Robert Mugabe is neither imposing, flamboyant, nor a preacher. Quiet and subdued, he is rather the thinking man's revolutionary.

Raised a Roman Catholic, Mugabe was never infected with protestant revivalism as were Nkomo and Muzorewa. A teacher, intellectual, and philosopher, Mugabe had little taste for Nkomo's flamboyant methods, but instead preferred persuasion. An ascetic who doesn't smoke or drink and rarely smiles, Mugabe is more comfortable reading a book by Karl Marx, Mao-Tse-tung, or Mahatma Gandhi than on the election campaign circuit. Mugabe has said that the most important single political influence on his life was Mahatma Gandhi, whose "passive resistance" inspired nationalists in both India and Africa [Ref. 120]. Mugabe believes that



personal and collective self-sacrifice and self-discipline are the keys to success in any endeavor and he imposed these standards both upon himself and his party [Ref. 121].

Unlike Nkomo and Muzorewa, who never really got much beyond the concepts of "independence" and "majority rule," Robert Mugabe had an ideology within which he operated. Mugabe was and is a Marxist. As such, his struggle was not simply aimed at obtaining independence and the vote for his countrymen, but also at eventually transforming Zimbabwe into a socialist society. During the 1980 election campaign, Mugabe's basic platform was the nationalization of industry, the radical redistribution of land, the introduction of sweeping state controls, and the public ownership of the country's natural resources, to include land, minerals, water, and forests. Mugabe himself probably best described his vision of Zimbabwe after the elections when during the election campaign he told an interviewer that:

If the whites believe in democracy, then they must accept that we are entitled to espouse socialist principles. But having said that, and having also accepted the fact that socialism cannot come about by imposition, there will have to be a demarcation between the areas where you collectivise and areas which must remain in individual hands until you can cultivate understanding.

There will be some who will not want to put their six acre, eight acre, ten acre land units together with the others. You cannot actually compel. You can develop an understanding, raise a consciousness towards acceptance. Therefore you do not force out those whites who want to remain as users of land. But they have to accept that the land belongs to the state and they will not be in any different position from the Africans.

But of course you have to maintain the system of private land use. I don't see how this can be disadvantageous to those whites who want to remain as growers of tobacco. But a lot of things will have to be done to reform the present system. [Ref. 122]

The fact that Mugabe had an ideology he was operating under enabled him maintain his consistency, and thus





his principles. Unlike Nkomo and Muzorewa, Mugabe never entered into any separate or internal agreements or compromises with the Rhodesian or British governments. For Mugabe, compromise was treason. The best agreement one could get at any given time was not necessarily the best agreement, and Mugabe was willing to hold out for the best agreement. He was not simply a freedom fighter, he was a revolutionary. Ultimately, it was Mugabe's unswervingly consistent adherence to a basic set of principles and goals that earned him the confidence of the voters in the 1980 elections.

Mugabe also differed from Nkomo and Muzorewa in the extent of his militancy. Although Nkomo was willing to carry on the guerrilla struggle indefinitely, he was always open to a peaceful, negotiated settlement. Muzorewa, in principle, never would really accept anything other than a negotiated solution. From the very beginning, Mugabe believed that change could be brought about only through military force. In 1963, he had begun to organize the military wing of ZAPU for the armed struggle. That same year, he helped form ZANU because ZAPU was not militant enough. In 1975, foreseeing the failures of the new ANC and the Victoria Falls talks, he and the members of the ZANU DARE planned an intensification of the guerrilla war. In Mugabe's view, the RF regime would only be willing to seriously negotiate an agreement acceptable to the nationalists once it had been brought to its knees or defeated on the battlefield. It was Mugabe's consistently militant attitude that would endear him to the guerrillas and enable him to begin the election campaign with the majority of the country already under his control.



### 3. Early Political Career

Returning to Rhodesia from Ghana in 1960, Robert Mugabe joined the NDP. Lecturing about what he had observed in Ghana and independence, he soon became a popular speaker in the Highfield township of Salisbury. In October 1960, Mugabe chaired the NDP Congress and was elected Information and Publicity Secretary. When the NDP was banned in 1961, Mugabe, along with the rest of the NDP leadership, continued his activism in ZAPU. When ZAPU was also banned, Mugabe and a number of his colleagues decided "that we would establish an underground movement which would train an army and start the armed struggle." [Ref. 123] That same year, Mugabe was charged with "sedition and subversive statements" for referring to the Rhodesian Front as a "bunch of cowboys." His wife was also charged with bringing the Queen's name into dis-esteem for saying that she was doing nothing for the Africans. When Joshua Nkomo called the members of the ZAPU executive to Dar-es-Salaam in 1963 to discuss forming a government-in-exile, Mugabe and his wife jumped bail and made their way through Botswana to Tanzania. On returning home to Rhodesia in December 1963, Mugabe was imprisoned for four months for jumping bail.

With the dissatisfaction among the ZAPU executive over Nkomo's leadership qualities, the stage was set for the creation of ZANU. Just before ZANU was formed, Mugabe returned to Ghana where he persuaded the Nkrumah government to train fifty guerrillas. On returning to Rhodesia, he was a driving force behind the formation of ZANU in August 1963. A year after ZANU was formed, it too was banned and Mugabe began over ten years in detention. While in detention, Mugabe not only earned three additional academic degrees, but also taught other detainees. But more importantly, unlike Nkomo and Sithole, Mugabe kept his communications



channels with the other political and military leaders of ZANU open. Consequently, with his colleagues, he was able to plan the war effort and maintain his own position of influence within ZANU even though he was in prison. [Ref. 124]

#### 4. Guerrilla Base

One of the greatest assets that Mugabe had in the 1980 elections was the nature of his relationship with the ZANLA guerrillas. The closeness of Mugabe to his guerrilla forces gave him several distinct advantages over his opponents. First, the fact that the ZANLA guerrillas recognized Mugabe as their leader gave him an advantage in all negotiations as he was able to negotiate from a position of strength. His control over the ZANLA guerrillas meant that he had the power to end or continue the war, regardless of election results. Additionally, ZANLA had the highest visibility and best reputation of any guerrilla organization in the country. Indeed, ZANLA was in control of most of the country by late 1979. ZANLA was the main vehicle by which ZANU politicized Zimbabwe's rural, black population. Mugabe's close association and identification with an organization that had both won the war and politically indoctrinated the population was probably the determining factor in the 1980 election outcome.

As discussed earlier, on 1 November 1974 Sithole was suspended as the president of ZANU by the imprisoned executive committee members and Robert Mugabe, as Secretary-General, was selected to represent ZANU at the conference with the Frontline State leaders in Lusaka. When the Frontline State leaders refused to recognize Mugabe as a representative of ZANU, the executive committee reluctantly reinstated Sithole. In December 1974, Sithole, along with





Muzorewa, Nkomo, and Chikerema signed the "Zimbabwe Declaration of Unity," which formed the new ANC. Released from detention that same month as a result of the "Detente Scenario," Mugabe was totally opposed to the unification of the nationalist organizations under the ANC, negotiations with the Smith regime, and any discussion of de-emphasizing the guerrilla effort. Believing that the war had not progressed far enough to force any real concessions from the Smith regime, the paroled members of the ZANU central committee met secretly in Lusaka with the members of the ZANU DARE. At that meeting it was decided to intensify the war effort and to send the six central committee members home to Rhodesia to recruit soldiers for ZANLA. Mugabe was sent to recruit in Salisbury and Mashonaland North. During the next several months, thousands of ZANLA recruits crossed the border from Rhodesia into Mozambique.

By March 1975, the pressure was again on ZANU. On 4 March Sithole was re-arrested. With the assassination of Herbert Chitepo on 18 March, the entire ZANU political and military leadership in Zambia was placed in detention by the Kaunda government. The members of the ZANU central committee held an emergency meeting, chaired by Mugabe, in Salisbury on 25 March 1975. At that meeting it was decided to send Mugabe and Edgar Tekere out of the country to provide leadership for ZANU's external members. Specifically, their mission was to try to get aid from countries such as Mozambique, Tanzania, and China and to make contact with and assist the ZANLA guerrillas based in Mozambique. The two men were to place specific emphasis upon improving ZANLA's logistical situation and upon insuring that the new ZANLA recruits who were being sent to Mozambique were being properly trained and treated.

[Ref. 125]



Mugabe arrived in Mozambique in early April 1975. With the exception of trips abroad to obtain international support, he would spend the rest of the war in Mozambique with his guerrillas. While in Mozambique, Mugabe spent most of his time politicizing the recruits--teaching them what the revolution was about, why the war was being fought, and why they had to join the war effort. He also taught them about the history of their country and the history of the nationalist movement. Because of his efforts in indoctrinating the guerrillas in the nationalist cause and his willingness to live and work with the guerrillas, Mugabe had won the support and loyalty of the guerrillas by late 1975. The "Mgagao Declaration" of 11 September 1975, in which the guerrilla commanders denounced the ANC and Sithole and first acknowledged Mugabe as their leader, has already been discussed at length. On 24 January 1976, the imprisoned DARE leaders in Zambia sent Mugabe a personal letter with an attached declaration in which they explained their reasons for removing Sithole and pledged their support to Mugabe's leadership of ZANU. In the letter, the DARE members' said:

On line with our party policy and party procedure, we decided that you as the number two man in the party would automatically take over the leadership of the party until the party congress was convened. We communicated this decision to the Comrades at Mgagao and they in turn made the famous Mgagao Statement denouncing the ANC-ZLC and calling upon you to lead the ANC. We also started an extensive campaign to inform all our members and organs of our decision and urged them to openly and publicly support the stand taken by the Comrades at Mgagao. The response of our party members and ordinary Zimbabweans has been overwhelming.

Because of lack of communication with you it was difficult for us to make a formal statement to the world of our decision until we got to know your stand. Now that we know your position we are in a position to make a formal declaration calling upon you to immediately take over the party leadership....The burden and responsibility of leading our party and revolution now rests on YOU. Should we be released by our captors we shall be glad to join you in the field. Let us stress again that our decision to have you as our party leader was reached after exhaustive consultations and takes





into account the views of most of the rank and file members of the party.

The declaration added that:

Our revolution is passing a highly critical period. The crisis coincides with the great crisis within our party (ZANU) which was initially sparked off by the tragic and untimely murder of our dynamic chairman Comrade Herbert Chitepo on the 18th March 1975 by agents of imperialism and the enemies of Zimbabwe revolution and the subsequent attempted decimation of the leadership of the party's external wing by the Zambian Government and later the defection and capitulation of Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole to the dark reactionary forces in the African National Council (ANC). A gigantic task is therefore being presented to the responsible leaders of our party and failure to perform it will involve the danger of a complete collapse of our revolution. The situation is such that any further delay will be fatal. It is within the perspective that after much soul-searching and extensive consultations with all the external organs of the party (armed forces in the camps, branches, districts, and provincial councils in Zambia and abroad) DARE has come to the final and irrevokable conclusion that the only man who can serve our revolution by providing a viable leadership in our liberation movement is Robert Gabriel Mugabe. We members of DARE solemnly, publicly declare:

1. That Comrade Robert Mugabe is now the provisional leader of our party (ZANU) and our revolution pending the convening of a party Congress and we call upon all Zimbabweans and all progressive forces in the world to support the dynamic leadership of Comrade Mugabe in Zimbabwe.

2. That Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole ceases with immediate effect to be the party leader and spokesman.

3. That Comrade Mugabe from now onwards will be the party's spokesman in the ANC national united front and other forums.

4. That the statement by the Comrades at Mgagao, Tanzania, pledging their support to Comrade Mugabe's leadership was in full conformity with the party's revolutionary line.

5. That the unity of our people, the identity of their aims, the unity of their views and their disposition to unite in carrying out the struggle are the elements characterizing the common strategy that must be opposed to that which imperialism is developing on a continental scale in Africa.

6. That the principle objective of our revolution is the seizure of power by means of destruction of the racist political-military machine and its replacement by the people in arms in order to change the existing economic and social order.





7. That armed revolutionary struggle constitutes the fundamental and principal form of our revolution.

8. That all other forms of struggle must serve to advance and not to retard the development of this fundamental form of struggle.

9. That guerrilla warfare as a genuine expression of the people's armed struggle is the most adequate form of waging and developing revolutionary warfare in our country in particular and Southern Africa in general.

10. That the leadership of the revolution requires an organizing principal, the existence of a unified political and military command, in order to guarantee victory.

11. That our revolutionary struggle constitutes a decisive contribution to the historic struggle of Africa and humanity to liberate themselves from slavery. [Ref. 126]

Thus, by early 1976, Mugabe had secured the allegiance of both the imprisoned guerrilla leaders in Zambia and the guerrillas operating from Tanzania and Mozambique. During the negotiations and controversies involving the ANC in the first nine months of 1976, Muzorewa, Sithole, and Nkomo would each claim to control the ZIPA guerrillas. Realizing that it would be necessary, while conducting negotiations, to determine which political leaders the guerrillas really recognized, President Machel of Mozambique asked the ZIPA guerrilla commanders to write a list of their political leaders. Mugabe's name was at the top of the list Machel received from the ZANLA commanders. [Ref. 127]

One final comment is necessary about the extent of the ZANLA guerrillas' allegiance to Mugabe. Nkomo, Muzorewa, and Sithole always seemed to be in positions where they had to lobby among the guerrillas for support. This was not the case with Mugabe. He was actually drafted by the guerrillas to be their political leader. Unlike the other three nationalist leaders, Mugabe had demonstrated a hard-line attitude and willingness to undergo the same hardships as the guerrillas. Thus, he endeared himself to them. He was one of them and they wanted him as their leader.



## 5. External Supporters

The type of external support received by ZANU differed considerably from that received by ZAPU and the UANC. While Nkomo and Muzorewa each received the majority of their support from a single source, the former from the Soviets and the latter from southern African and Western business interests, Mugabe received support from a wide variety of different sources. Although the assistance given to Mugabe and ZANU by communist bloc countries was significant, they also received considerable aid from western European countries, third-world countries, and a number of African nations. The large variety of ZANU's supporters gave Mugabe a number of advantages over his opponents in the 1980 elections. First the large number and variety of ZANU external supporters tended to give Mugabe and ZANU legitimacy as representatives of the Zimbabwean people. In effect, this was de facto international recognition, something the Muzorewa government had been unable to obtain. Second, Mugabe and ZANU were not tainted by their close association with any single supporter. While Nkomo and Muzorewa could be accused of being puppets of the Soviets and white business interests, respectively, it was very difficult to accuse Mugabe of fronting for forces other than the Zimbabwean people. Mugabe's apparent independence was one of the key factors in his credibility with the electorate.

During the 1960's and early 1970's, ZANU received the majority of its military assistance from Communist China. As discussed earlier, the People's Republic of China (PRC) assisted ZANU by providing training in China, weapons, advisers, and, most importantly, a theory of how to conduct a guerrilla war. During this period, ZANU also received aid from Romania, Yugoslavia, and North Korea, who were all



closely alligned with the Chinese communists. [Ref. 128] With the death of Mao and a decrease of Chinese intervention in Africa in the mid-1970's, ZANU started receiving less aid from China. Although China would continue to give ZANU at least a nominal quantity of aid, Mugabe was forced to look for other sources of support.

In mid and late 1978, Mugabe began lobbying a number of communist, third-world, African, and western European countries for support for ZANU/ZANLA. In the summer and fall of 1978, Mugabe and his representatives visited a number of communist and socialist countries, including the Soviet Union, Cuba, Vietnam, North Korea, Iraq, Ethiopia, Romania, and Yugoslavia. Mugabe personally travelled over 25,000 miles seeking aid from countries that had traditionally only supported ZAPU. With the exception of the Soviet Union, where Mugabe claimed no one of importance would talk to him, he was extremely successful in obtaining financial, logistical, and military support for ZANU. [Ref. 129] The reason for Mugabe's success was that it was becoming apparent to these countries that ZANLA was doing most of the fighting in Zimbabwe-Rhodesia and that, of all the nationalist organizations, ZANU was the most representative of the Zimbabwean people.

Communist countries were not the only places from which Mugabe sought and obtained aid. Between 1978 and 1980, ZANU officials visited a number of countries in western Europe, to include Spain, West Germany Denmark and Norway. In addition to financial aid, these countries provided ZANU with food, clothing, and medical supplies. [Ref. 130] India and Pakistan also gave ZANU considerable political and moral support and supplied the organization with foodstuffs and medical supplies [Ref. 131]. Within Africa itself, ZANU's strongest and most consistent





supporters were Mozambique, Tanzania, Angola, Ghana, and Nigeria.

Of ZANU's African supporters, Presidents Nyerere and Machel were by far the strongest and the most consistent. Besides providing diplomatic support for ZANU, Tanzania and Mozambique provided ZANLA with training, equipment, bases, and other military support. In 1978, the two Frontline State presidents renewed their efforts to obtain increased military aid for ZANU/ZANLA from the Soviet Union and Cuba. While they were somewhat successful in getting assistance from Cuba, the Soviet Union continued her policy of supporting only ZAPU/ZIPRA.

In September 1978, Mugabe met with Fidel Castro in Addis-Ababa. The meeting had two purposes. The first was to strengthen Cuban-ZANU relations. At that time, over 500 ZANLA guerrillas were being trained near Addis-Ababa by Cuban instructors. Cuban advisers were also training ZANLA forces in Mozambique and Angola. Castro told Mugabe that he was more than willing to provide ZANU with training, food, medical supplies, and international support and generally to develop closer relations with ZANU. However, he also told Mugabe that Cuba was in no position to provide arms to ZANLA. Cuba was dependent upon the Soviet Union for arms and could not transfer weapons to ZANLA without Soviet approval. This was the second reason for Mugabe's meeting with Castro. ZANU wanted Castro to use his influence with the Soviets to convince them to start supplying military hardware to ZANLA. [Ref. 132]

In October 1978, Presidents Nyerere and Machel called upon the Soviet Union to start supporting ZANU. Machel had assigned his own FPLM troops to accompany ZANLA guerrillas on operations inside of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia. They had reported back to Machel that the ZANLA guerrillas had



been extremely successful in gaining the support of the population and that they were winning the war against the security forces. Nyerere and Machel argued that the Soviets should support ZANU for several reasons. First, they argued that the divisions within the Zimbabwean nationalist movement were being exacerbated by the Sino-Soviet feud. Russia, they argued, should put aside its feelings about China and start giving ZANU the same support she had been giving ZAPU in order to unite the two nationalist organizations and insure a nationalist victory in Zimbabwe-Rhodesia. Also, China was incapable of providing ZANLA with the type and quantity of weapons it would need to bring the war to a successful conclusion. Thus, the two Frontline State leaders believed that Russian weapons were critical to ZANLA's success. [Ref. 133]

Throughout late 1978 and early 1979, Mugabe maintained the hope that Russia would supply ZANU with armaments [Ref. 134]. But Russian aid was not forthcoming. The Soviets were continuing to back ZAPU and if ZANU wanted Soviet military aid, it would have to join ZAPU. Mugabe and ZANU refused to yield to Soviet wishes and by July 1979 had given up all hope of obtaining Soviet weapons, except for those that Machel could spare them. [Ref. 135] Mugabe's failure to obtain Soviet aid probably assisted him in the 1980 elections. For having been snubbed by the Soviets, it was very difficult for anyone to claim that he was fronting for them.

## 6. Political Mobilization of the Electorate

As has been mentioned a number of times previously, the key factor in the Mugabe-ZANU victory in the 1980 elections was the mobilization of the electorate by ZANU. The instrument of this mobilization was the ZANLA guerrilla



organization. The party was able to use the rural political infrastructure that was set up to support the guerrillas to get the votes on election day.

According to Josiah Tongogara, the ZANLA guerrilla commander, the ZANLA guerrilla fighters of the early 1970's were more like political commissars than guerrilla soldiers. They were given very generalized training in guerrilla warfare, but very specialized training in mass mobilization. During a guerrilla's training, special emphasis was placed upon his political education. The guerrilla recruits were taught about the grievances they would be fighting to correct, namely the deprivation of the land, the limitations of the number of cattle a family could keep, restrictions on education and job opportunities, and the inferior African healthcare service. Additionally, the guerrilla recruits discussed the writings of Marx, Lenin, and Mao, analyzed capitalism, communism, and colonialism, and studied the history, geography, climate, vegetation, agriculture, wildlife, minerals, industry, population, and economic base of the country of Zimbabwe. Finally, the guerrillas were taught that their primary source of supply, shelter, and other assistance was the people of Zimbabwe, from whom they all came. [Ref. 136]

Thus, the guerrillas would go into the villages with the idea of winning the "hearts and minds" of the local people through persuasion. Initially, the guerrilla political cadre would answer the villagers' questions about their grievances and the goals of the war. Gradually, they would infiltrate political commissars into the villages as permanent residents, installing them first as teachers in the schools and later in positions in the local government. At this time, a more formalized political infrastructure would be set up within the village. An intelligence network





would be established to identify and eliminate the security force informants among the population. Next, the guerrillas would challenge, embarrass, discredit, and finally destroy the credibility of the government sponsored civilian administration. In its place would be established the councils and committees who would have the responsibility for the logistical support of the guerrilla effort. When possible, the members of these councils were elected by the population at large. Officers were appointed to manage specialized areas such as transportation, agriculture, finance, and health. Councils were established not only at the village level, but also at the district and provincial levels. If a decision of great importance or involving great expense had to be made, it was generally referred from the village level up to the district or regional level. Finally, this "shadow" government, whose sole mission was to support the guerrillas, only emerged at night so as to avoid detection by the Rhodesian security forces. [Ref. 137]

Through these techniques, ZANLA was able to influence, if not control, the vast majority of rural Rhodesia by the late 1970's. ZANLA was most successful in organizing these grass-roots political infrastructures in the Mashonaland, Manicaland, and Victoria provinces, although their success was by no means limited to just these regions. Although guerrilla claims of controlling over 90% of the country were probably somewhat exaggerated, the best testimony to the great extent of guerrilla control was probably given by the actions of the Rhodesian government. In 1974, the Rhodesian Minister of Justice opposed placing certain areas of the country under martial law because to hand over the maintenance of law and order to the army would be admitting that the civil government had lost control of those areas. But between March 1978 and mid-1979 over 95% of the



country was brought under martial law. Thus, by white Rhodesian standards, control of the greater portion of the country had been lost to the guerrillas. [Ref. 138]

Having control of a large percentage of the black Zimbabwean population, in January and February 1980 ZANLA's mission was to insure that the local support of the guerrillas was transferred into votes for Mugabe and ZANLA. If election results are considered a good indication, ZANLA was extremely successful in this endeavor. Since ZANLA already had the loyalty of the local population, its political cadre did not view their task as one of converting voters or convincing them of the correctness of ZANU's position. Instead, they spent the greatest part of their efforts in trying to insure that the black voters would be able to fulfill the mechanical requirements for voting. The ZANLA cadre made sure that the voters knew who the candidates were, where the voting places were, and how to vote. Considerable effort was also spent in countering the deceptive and confusing literature and verbal propaganda that was being disseminated by the UANC and the security forces. These efforts were concentrated in the areas with the highest illiteracy rates. Campaign rallies and sing-alongs were used to keep morale up, especially when pro-Muzorewa auxiliaries were in the area. When the auxiliaries intimidated villagers during the day, the ZANLA cadre would move into the villages at night and hold meetings to get the people back on the right track. At the rallies and meeting, the ZANLA cadre did not emphasize Muzorewa's or Nkomo's shortcomings or waste much effort in praising the ZANU platform. Instead, they reminded the people of ZANLA's decisive role in the war and thus appealed to their sense of loyalty to the guerrilla army. [Ref. 139]



In conclusion, one of the most interesting, and probably most accurate, analyses of the reasons for ZANU's landslide election victory was provided by a high ranking ZAPU official when he said that:

The PF lost the election two years ago when ZANU began intensive political campaigning, using ZANLA to politicize the masses. ZANLA moved into the former ZIPRA areas at this time, such as Mashonaland West. They held pungwes (meetings) for two years covering 80 percent of the country. This is the most important factor about the election results...Of ZIPRA, 99 percent were Ndebele speaking and therefore they had language difficulties in Shona speaking areas...We concentrated in one area of the country for recruitment of soldiers.

Commenting on accusations of ZANU intimidation of voters, the official stated that ZANU probably would have won a few less seats without intimidation,

but they still would have won the majority...the results of the election are still a rough assessment of the democratic will of the people of Zimbabwe...It would be idiocy to say there was corruption by the British in favour of Mugabe. ZANU(PF) beat the British, the Americans, and South Africa at their own game. [Ref. 140]





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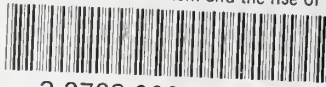
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